LETTERS

ON THE

CONFESSIONS

OF

J. J. ROUSSEAU.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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J. J. ROUSSEAU.

BY M. GINGUENE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

Ille velut fidis arcana ſodalibus olim
Credebat libris; neque, ſi malè gefſerat, uſquam
Decurrens alio, neque ſi bene: quo fit ut omnis
Votiva pateat veluti deſcripta tabella
Vita ſenis. HORAT. Lib. II. Sat. I.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

INTRODUCTION.

GENIUS is avenged; the French nation has vindicated itſelf in the face of Europe! it has decreed a ſtatue to the Author of the Social Contract; and enacted, that his Widow ſhall be maintained at the expence of the ſtate. This recompence, after the ancient ſtyle, is at once worthy of a people, to whom the ancients are no longer an object of envy, ſince they are free; and of a great man, who was the object of deſpotic perſecution, only becauſe he endeavoured to recal men to the enjoyment of their ancient liberty.

I offer my mite of incenſe at the foot of his ſtatue. The origin of the following Letters is ſufficiently explained in the beginning of the firſt, which is to be conſidered ſimply as a

ſpecies of introduction. They were written juſt after the publication of the Second Part of the Confeſſions, and the laſt collection of Rouſſeau's Letters: At that time I did not conceive them worthy of publication. Some friends, however, urged me to ſeize the moment of making them public, when the memory of their object was in a manner rendered ſacred *. Others forewarned me, that notwithſtanding this circumſtance, the printing of theſe Letters would raiſe me a great number of enemies: but that conſideration is what I have leaſt regarded.

Should this prediction be verified in the event it will not be the firſt ſpecimen of the kind I have received. I have drawn from precedent occurrences, a maxim which may have its uſe, although I confeſs that I have not adhered to it—It is frequently more dangerous for a writer to confeſs his admiration, or his

* Theſe Letters were in fact delivered to the preſs, ſome days after the Decree of 21ſt December; they ſhould have appeared in the month of January, but particular delays incident to the preſs have been the means of retarding their publication. The *a-propos*, therefore, would have failed, if any thing concerning Jean Jacques could poſſibly be *mal a-propos*.

attachments, than his enmities—the cauſe of this is concealed in one of the moſt diſgraceful receſſes of the human heart.

It is impoſſible to form an impartial judgment of Jean Jacques Rouſſeau, and particularly of his Confeſſions, without giving offence to many; but, does it therefore follow, that we ought never to declare the truth? muſt we wait till we have neither enemies, nor friends of enemies, any longer in exiſtence?

Shall Science, of which he has been ſo diſtinguiſhed an ornament, although he has inveighed ſo much againſt it, ſhall it be mute in his praiſe in this revolution, ſo propitious to his glory? Long before our legiſlators had decreed him public honors, they had already adopted the greater part of his principles, and frequently mentioned his name with reſpect: our artiſts had almoſt exhauſted their induſtry, in erecting him monuments: our patriotic youth had carried his effigy in triumph round the ruins of that Baſtile, which, but for him, perhaps would yet have been ſtanding *.

His

* This is not the only homage that youth has offered to his memory. At the news of the Decree, a company of

His eulogy is intimately connected with that of men of genius, benefactors and deliverers of France.—What further offence can a few obſcure pages, thrown before the public, without pretenſions, and without parade, poſſibly occaſion to thoſe who execrate his memory?

It is not ſo great a misfortune to have enemies, as to merit their hatred, or to feel it; and againſt either of theſe inconveniences I believe myſelf equally ſecured.

young perſons, aſſociated under the intereſting title of *Friends to the Inſtructor of Emilius*, unanimouſly entered into the following reſolutions:

I. That the Decree of the National Aſſembly ſhall be engraved upon durable ſtone.

II. That ſix ſhall be deputed to repair to Ermenonville, in the iſle of Poplars, the reſting place of this man of truth and nature, and ſhall lay at the foot of his mauſoleum, in the name of the French Nation, the engraved Decree; and upon his tomb, a bough of olive, and a crown of laurel.

Theſe reſolutions were carried into execution a few days after. What may not be expected from youth capable of ſuch emotions of gratitude and virtue!

LET-

LETTERS,

&c. &c. &c.

LETTER I.

NO, Madam, you are not miſtaken. That which you are pleaſed to call inſtinct, and which, in fact, is only the perception of a well-regulated mind, and the ſentiment of a delicate ſoul, has better directed you than the pretended ſubtlety of wit, and the frigid reaſoning of philoſophers. You continue firm in your admiration of Jean Jacques, even though you have read theſe terrible Confeſſions, which have ſtartled the conſciences of ſo many—although not over timid; and ſeem to have wreſted from him more partiſans than he actually poſſeſſed. But, notwithſtanding all this,

which would induce others to depend implicitly on their uſual manner of judging, you ſeem to be doubtful of yours—you put it to a teſt, which I believe to be an invention peculiarly your own—you have formed your opinion of theſe Confeſſions—you have written, you have explained the motives which have induced you to form that opinion; but you heſitate to honor me with its communication, fearing, as you ſay, the politeneſs of a man, or the prepoſſeſſion of a friend.

You are deſirous, therefore, that I ſhould alſo write, and that I ſhould alſo explain the motives which lead my opinion, that you may confront it with yours; if they differ, we may diſcuſs the difference; if they accord, you will then be certain that I am free from the imputation of complaiſance. Upon the main point of the queſtion, I believe we are agreed; but, have we both examined it under the ſame aſpects, and travelled over the ſame ground, to arrive at the ſame point? This is the point of which you wiſh to be informed. I obey you, though undeſerving the too favourable prepoſſeſſion which you have in my favor. You have the appearance of ſubmitting yourſelf to my teſt, when, in fact, it is I who am going to yield up mine to yours.

I will declare to you, then, all the good and the bad which I think of Jean Jacques: poſſibly, in the concluſion, I may have made his eulogium, though not merely his panegyric.

I ſhall

I ſhall firſt examine, whether he ought to have written his Confeſſions—whether he ought to have wrote them in the manner he has adopted; and afterwards, what judgment we ought to form of the work, and what opinion we ſhould entertain of the author.

Duclos, one of the moſt juſtly reſpected men of letters of the preſent age; a man leſs reſpected for the great ſuperiority of his talents, than for his auſtere and inflexible probity: Duclos, to whom Rouſſeau writes as follows:

"How is it, my dear friend, that you con-
"trive to think as an honeſt man, and yet
"eſcape being hanged?" Duclos adviſed him, during his reſidence at Motiers, to write his Confeſſions, or Memoirs of his Life. "It
"would be very difficult," replied Rouſſeau,
"to do it without revealing the ſecrets of
"others; and to make the attempt, it is re-
"quiſite that I ſhould be allowed more tran-
"quillity than I at preſent poſſeſs, and more
"probably than I ſhall ever enjoy. But if I
"live long enough, I do not abſolutely re-
"nounce the attempt."

Rey, a bookſeller of Amſterdam, had been long ſince urgent with him to the ſame purpoſe; and at his entreaty, Rouſſeau had accordingly employed himſelf from the time of his reſidence at Montmorency, and had begun to ſelect the neceſſary documents for the undertaking. The authority of a bookſeller, who might poſſibly have had intereſted views, prove nothing in

favor of this project; but that of Duclos is decisive.

He thoroughly knew the neglected philosopher, whose friend he always continued, although living in the midst of those who disguised the most implacable enmity, under the mask of friendly concern; he was neither ignorant of his misfortunes, nor the source of them; he knew, that in making his own confessions, Rousseau must necessarily include other people. To excite him to this undertaking, it was only to say to him, "Your "youth, harassed and disgraced, did not pro- "mise what you now are: such a contrast, "painted by yourself, cannot fail to interest "in a manner the most sensible. You have "been guilty of indiscretions; confess them "ingenuously; and this confession will give "more relief—more reputation to your virtues. "You are unfortunate, persecuted, calumni- "ated; you will affect by the picture of your "misfortunes—you will even disarm your per- "secutors of the ill-will they owe you, and "you will confound those who blacken your "reputation." This is the meaning of the simple expression, *Write your Memoirs*. It is impossible, in the then predicament of Rousseau, and the knowledge which Duclos had of that predicament, and its causes, his meaning could have been otherwise.

But, ought he to have written in the manner he has? This question has reference either to the

the mode in which he has ſpoken of himſelf, or that in which he has ſpoken of others.

Nothing is, in general, more embarraſſing than ſpeaking of one's ſelf; the good opinion, however, which moſt men either actually entertain of themſelves, or wiſh to impreſs upon others, is the reaſon that, under ſimilar circumſtances, the only thing to embarraſs them is, their being modeſt, or their anxiety to appear ſo. The memoirs of individuals are ſcarce any thing but apologies. Rouſſeau conceived the difficult project of deſcribing himſelf, ſuch as, after a long and ſerious inveſtigation, he found himſelf in the deepeſt receſſes of his heart; leaving therefore *Memoirs* to coxcombs and mountebanks, he undertook his *Confeſſions*.

The then ſtate of public opinion reſpecting him, rendered this project highly meritorious. Perſecuted for the moſt excellent of his writings, the Author of the Social Contract of Eloiſa and Emilius, united ſympathy for his misfortunes, with concern for his genius and virtue. All Europe, in reading his work, received too ample evidence to doubt of either. Some vague rumours, originating from communications made in the unguarded effuſions of friendſhip, had, it is true, been ſpread abroad relative to the follies of his youth, and even upon ſome faults of a darker complexion in his maturer age; but theſe were indiſtinct, and

ſuch as a ſpecies of half confeſſion, communicated with that apparent frankneſs which impoſes more than complete diſſimulation, would have totally deſtroyed theſe impreſſions in their infancy; and, receiving from that moment as authentic, what he determined to declare in his Confeſſions, poſterity would have attributed the reſt to the aſperſions of calumny.

Inſtead of this, How does he act? Vices, faults, errors,—he tells all—he extenuates—he palliates nothing; he unfolds his heart before man, as before the Supreme Being—he not only confeſſes what is bad, but what is vile; and, for ſo proud a ſpirit, how much more poignant muſt ſuch a confeſſion have been? Yet not ſatisfied with theſe accuſations, he extenuates the good he might ſay, or leave us to believe. In vain did his admirers, his enthuſiaſts, (for from that moment they were numerous), attempt to fix on his head the crown of virtue; he plucks it off, and declares, and proves, in an hundred different modes, that he is not virtuous. Virtue implies ſtrength and fortitude; and he declares himſelf feeble and timid. He believes it of utility, that a man, regarded as above the vulgar claſs, ſhould for once ſhow himſelf intentionally, and undiſguiſed. No one had done this before. He wiſhes to ſet this arduous example; and reſuming this moſt difficult taſk at two different epochas, he neither varies in his plan, nor in his courageous ingenuouſneſs.

genuouſneſs. He had hitherto verified his motto *, in revealing their true characters to others; he confirms it very differently, when he acquaints us with his own.

With reſpect to the manner in which he has ſpoken of others, it is much eaſier to cenſure, than to point out how he could have acted differently. I have previouſly ſhown, from his anſwer to Duclos, how forcibly he felt the difficulty of relating his own life, *without betraying the ſecrets of others*. Nearly two years before, he had expreſſed himſelf to the ſame purpoſe to M. Moultou, the conſtant friend of his memory, as he had formerly been to his perſon †. "Unfortunately," ſaid he, "not "having always lived alone, I cannot pour-"tray myſelf, without at the ſame time pour-"traying many others; and I have not the "right to be equally free with them as with "myſelf, at leaſt to the public, and *while they* "*are yet living*." Thus it is clear, that at the commencement, as well as towards the concluſion of his life, it was uniformly his intention that this work ſhould be poſthumous—a circumſtance equally advantageous to himſelf and his connections; and it was this conſideration, as he himſelf declares in his Xth Book, that emboldened him to write his Confeſſions,

* Vitam impendere vero.

† M. Moultou's letter bears date January 1763; that of Duclos, in December 1764.

for which he ſhould never have occaſion to bluſh.

But it may naturally be enquired, Whether he ſhould, even after his own death, have expoſed to the animadverſions of poſterity, the memory of thoſe ſecrets he has thus revealed without their conſent?—This is a queſtion.

He is cenſured, and not perhaps without foundation, for having revealed the miſconduct of Madame de Warens. He has certainly been warm in the praiſe of this charming benefactreſs—he delights in deſcribing himſelf as regenerated, or rather created, by her. It is under her auſpices that he is born at once to wiſdom and delight—goodneſs and beneficence—anxiety for the unfortunate—courteſy—affability—an underſtanding ſolid and cultivated—diſintereſtedneſs—frankneſs—a heart feeling, delicate, and formed for friendſhip.—Such is the picture he has given of that adorable *Maman*, whom he always ſpeaks of as an angel, with an angelic mind, and as a celeſtial being.

But why deform this portrait with ſhades ſo diſguſting? Admitting that he thought it eſſential to his plan, to mention the favors which Madame de Warens granted perſonally to him, and the ſyſtematic and more rational than voluptuous mode in which ſhe had led him gradually up to the enjoyment of all ſhe could grant; a mode which muſt eventually have influenced his moral conduct, and there-

fore neceſſarily belonging to his Confeſſions; yet he ought not to have blazoned, nay he ought rather ſtudiouſly to have concealed, every other indiſcretion of this very remarkable woman. Why then does he exhibit her demi-valet Claude Anet, himſelf, and Courtille, the journeyman hair-dreſſer, ſucceſſively admitted to her embraces? Why inform us of this odious communication of her favors, which ſhe herſelf very indifferently propoſes, without any conception on her ſide that ſhe was making any extraordinary propoſition? Is not this wantonly vilifying a character whom he pretends to reſpect, and debaſing this angel beneath the moſt infamous of her ſex?

I know that he repreſents her as free from the influence of the paſſions—cold to the pleaſures of ſenſe—led aſtray from her youth by the intereſted philoſophy of her firſt ſeducer—depraved by reaſon, not by her propenſities—regarding her chaſtity as of no importance, becauſe it had coſt her nothing to be chaſte—yielding herſelf up habitually through coldneſs of temperament—regarding enjoyment as an act in itſelf indifferent, and only acquiring value from that which the men attach to it—not conſidering that which, according to our inſtitutions, is the deſtruction of the ſex, but as the eaſy means of confirming the friendſhip of ours—and never debaſing herſelf, even in the moſt urgent extremities, to ſell thoſe very favors

avors which ſhe voluntarily beſtowed with ſo little ſcruple.

All this is doubtleſs very excuſable, and, blended with ſo many amiable qualities, with ſo many charms, and even virtues, ſeems to juſtify what Rouſſeau has aſſerted of her, "That "if Socrates could eſteem Aſpaſia, he would "have reſpected Madame de Warens." But who does not perceive that this reſpect would have been of the ſame kind as the eſteem felt by the wiſeſt of men for an Athenian courteſan; that neither this eſteem, nor this reſpect, are ſuch as could be acceptable to a virtuous woman? and upon ſuppoſition that Socrates would have placed Madame de Warens above Aſpaſia, it would always have been in the ſame rank; and it was not for a tender and grateful child, thus to claſs his benefactreſs, and his beloved *Maman*.

He might alſo ſtill have diſpenſed with informing poſterity of his connections with other women, particularly two; one of whom was a long time his miſtreſs, and the other had inſpired him with the ſtrongeſt and moſt ardent paſſion. It is true, indeed, that the one followed up the kindneſſes, the attentions of friendſhips, with the malignant procedure of malicious intermeddling, and the proſecutions of hatred; and that the ſecond appeared to have given her attachment, rendered, according to our way of thinking, reſpectable for the length

length of its duration; a ſpecies of publicity which left little ſcope to impeach her want of prudence with a third. Theſe reaſons, ſufficient for every other author leſs auſtere in his morals, are yet conſidered as inſignificantly weak in favor of the moſt rigid and moſt eloquent Apoſtle of Good Manners.

Here he has at leaſt the plea of neceſſity, that the avowal of theſe connections was eſſential in the hiſtory of his life. But might not this neceſſity have been diſpenſed with in favor of the latter? His love for Madame de H—— was imputed to his charge as a crime; and he conſiders it as ſuch himſelf, becauſe this paſſion was a treſpaſs upon the rights of friendſhip: he muſt neceſſarily then paint to the life, the ſituation of the actors, or renounce, at this ſcene, the moſt animated paſſage of his whole work, or rather abandon the work itſelf; for this is a moſt material point; becauſe this very error was either in reality, or at leaſt in his opinion, the ſource of all the ſubſequent misfortunes of his life.

Theſe are, I believe, the only points in which he, and he alone, could be cenſured. And who is the author of memoirs who has diveſted them of gallantries and intrigues? It is only then from his habitual reſerve, and the chaſtity of his pen—his favorable opinion of female virtue—the auſterity of his principles—the elevation of his morals, that he muſt be judged upon this article with ſo much rigor.

And

And when at length this work, ſo long announced, firſt made its appearance, envy and malice, diſguiſed under the maſk of delicacy and diſcretion, lifted up their voices together, and mimicked the cenſures of delicacy, and the ſcruples of wounded diſcretion. With a peculiar warmth of friendſhip they defended Madame de Warens, above twenty years deceaſed, and almoſt univerſally unknown. Honeſt people, guided more by their feelings than their reflection, followed blindly the impulſe they received; and the general inqueſt of fine gentlemen, who traduced the character of twenty women in a day, appeared horribly offended. Though I have now conſiderably reduced theſe cenſures, I have not yet ſufficiently diminiſhed them. It is more probable that I have given too much quarter to hatred and malice; for it is notorious, that Madame de Warens has left neither children, nor any perſon of her name, nor relations ſo intimately allied as to approve her virtues, nor to bluſh for her failings. Never having attempted to throw any veil over her miſconduct, all Annecy, all Chambery, were acquainted with it. If theſe *Confeſſions* had found their way into theſe two towns, they would have told nobody anything but what they were previouſly acquainted with; whilſt in France, and in all the reſt of Europe, the name of Madame de Warens is the ſame as any fictitious name in a romance, and tells the reader nothing more than he might learn in Eloiſa,

Eloiſa, from that of Madame d'Orbe, or Madame de Wolmar.

I am aware that the ſpirit of party reaſons differently; its method is to blame, or to praiſe, without diſcrimination; and unfortunately, in this reſpect, indolence is too often an accomplice with malignity. But it is this that I entreat you, Madam,—it is this that I will entreat every unprejudiced underſtanding, to keep always in view, previous to their forming a deciſive judgment in a point ſo bitterly, ſo keenly urged againſt the Author of the Confeſſions.

It would certainly be too unjuſt to cenſure him as criminal, for having diſcovered the machinations of ſome other perſons, and laying them open to the world, either as the tyrants of his infancy—the oppreſſors of his youth, or his more ſecret perſecutors at a maturer age. All theſe ſecondary portraits contribute—to the diſpoſition—to the variety—to the truth of his pictures: they do but amuſe us at the expence of the originals who are no longer in exiſtence; and who, being but obſcurely known while they lived, are, properly ſpeaking, but imaginary portraits.

He has been eſpecially excuſed for having ſo well deſcribed the trifling diſpoſition, the ſneaking avarice, and the fooliſh caprices of that Montaigu, the ambaſſador to Venice, after the manner of the valet de chambre Bargac,

gac *, who, at that time, made and unmade ambaſſadors and miniſters at pleaſure. A man of genius has always been permitted, at this period, moſt emphatically, to cruſh with a daſh of his pen, the imperious inſect, who, valuing himſelf on a few titles, frequently acquired by the moſt abject meanneſs, thinks that he may therefore diſpenſe with the duties of reſpect and juſtice.

Such a thing is not worthy the name of an enemy: he is a petulant creature; an importunate and ridiculous being, on whom one is ſufficiently avenged, merely by deſcribing him: and how fortunate is the Author of ſuch a work as the Confeſſions, to find ready to his pen ſuch a pleaſant opportunity of diverting the reader!

With reſpect to theſe whom he regarded ſeriouſly as his avowed enemies, joining to malevolence both the talent and the power to injure, I ſhall not here determine whether they were actually ſo or not: but I ſhall enquire whether, ſuppoſing them to have been ſo, with ſuch cogent reaſons to believe this to be the caſe, he ought to have ſpoken of them in the manner he has done? And who can doubt for a moment, whether he poſſeſſed this right? Who could, who would wiſh to deprive the

* Valet de Chambre to Cardinal Fleury. Vide Memoirs of Marſhall de Richelieu.

miſerable

miſerable of this reſource? How! Shall he be perſecuted, blackened, and ſlandered, during his life; and ſhall he not have the privilege of diſcloſing the machinations of thoſe to whom he fell a victim? And what have thoſe who hate him to be offended at, ſince he only relates the ſource—ſince he only declares the effects of their hatred?

But almoſt all have been his friends, his patrons, his benefactors.—I apprehend it will be ſufficient to trumpet abroad their pretended benefactions, the final intent of which has been only to enſlave him, inſtead of rendering him ſervice: thoſe who, incapable of having, for the man of delicacy who received, any other conſideration than attachment to the perſon giving or obliging, but have no longer any regard for the perſon, when this friendſhip is extinguiſhed, or converted into hatred; it will be ſufficient to uſurp the ſacred title of Friend, and to extort its due of ſentiment, without experiencing it ourſelves; or to call ourſelves protector of a man who will not be patroniſed, to have the power afterwards to haraſs, to calumniate, to deſtroy him, without his having it in his power to ſtave off their oppreſſion, to avenge his ruin, and to unmaſk detraction. Such doctrine is doubtleſs very convenient, and we ought not to be ſurpriſed that in the world it is not without its defenders.

But

But here it will perhaps be urged, that I am doing preciſely what I have previouſly ſaid I did not mean to do—that I am begging the queſtion; thoſe whom he calls his enemies, I alſo call the ſame; and that I regard, as truth, their enmity, machinations, and their ſyſtem! By no means: I ſhall return to that in the concluſion—but at preſent I do not decide theſe points: I only ſuppoſe the facts imputed to them by Rouſſeau, to be true; and I repeat, that, after theſe facts, after the intimate conviction he had of their reality, he has not tranſgreſſed either the bounds of defence, or lawful retaliation: I aſſert, that the alarm which they previouſly ſounded againſt this work, ſeems to have been occaſioned by the conſciouſneſs of theſe perſons therein mentioned, of having merited the author's animadverſions, and the injuries they had heaped upon him, than from any bad conſequences reſulting therefrom.

D'Alembert, who, as ſoon as the unfortunate Jean Jacques had cloſed his eyes, calumniated him in full academy, with a kindneſs ſo perfidious*, is but rarely and incidentally named

* Let the friends of this learned and diſtinguiſhed character pardon me this expreſſion! I could not characteriſe otherwiſe that inexcuſable conduct which I have alluded to. Human actions take their character from what they are in themſelves, and not from what their authors, in other reſpects, may be. If a God could calumniate what he ſhould

named in his Confeſſions. Diderot, who had ſpread the alarm, and was tranſported to ſuch violently injurious proceedings in a Note of his Eſſay on the Life of Seneca *, is often deſcribed there as culpable, but only of indiſcretion; want of diſcretion rather than treachery and rancour; and always with a degree of regard, very ill recompenſed by this indecent and reprehenſible ſally.

"In my miſunderſtanding with Diderot, "whom I believe leſs malevolent than weak "and indiſcreet, I have always preſerved in "my heart an attachment, and even an eſteem "for him, and a reſpect for our ſincere friend-"ſhip, which I am aſſured continued a long "time as ſincere on his part as on mine †." This is the language of an honeſt man, who reſpects himſelf in the perſon who was the object of his attachment. What then muſt we pronounce between Diderot and Jean Jacques? Nothing elſe than ſimply to compare the Note alluded to in the Eſſay on Seneca, with this paſſage of the Confeſſions.

An individual is perhaps ill treated ‡, accuſed, charged perhaps too violently; he is yet living—he has not remonſtrated againſt theſe accuſations. It is for him firſt to judge,

ſhould ſay, it would not be leſs a calumny for coming from the mouth of a God. Vide Note 5. at the end of the IVth Letter.

* See Note 6. ibid. † Confeſſions, Book X.

‡ M. Grimin.

and

and afterwards to defend himſelf: it remains for thoſe who knew him, to ſay what they can in his favor; but conſidering, as true, every thing that his own and his friends ſilence, and the credibility of Rouſſeau, render more than probable; yet Rouſſeau has not, with reſpect to him, infringed upon the law which juſtice had engaged him to eſtabliſh, viz. *to make his, and other people's Confeſſions, with the ſame freedom, in every thing which concerned him; never to ſay any thing but the ill peculiarly attached to himſelf, by that which he was neceſſarily compelled to declare* *. As to all the reſt, excepting the ſingle point on which I have paſſed condemnation, I ſee nothing that can induce one to coincide in all the rout that has been made about them.

The Author has ſaid nothing but what was neceſſarily connected with the adventures of his life, and what might be ſubſervient to his defence, without denying or diſſembling his wrongs, even before his enemies. It was not his deſire to make them appear, nor did he place them in any other point of view than as they really were, or at leaſt as he conſidered both himſelf and them. He ought not then to have written his Confeſſions otherwiſe: it was emphatically his duty to write, and do honour to his memory, by this monument of unexampled veracity. Who ſhall cenſure, that

* Vide Concluſion of the VIIIth Book.

is

is not perſonally concerned, what friends like Duclos, Moultou, Du Perou, and others of the ſame character, have adviſed or approved? If concerced, of what weight can his cenſure be to thoſe who are impartial?

What man, not abſolutely deaf to reaſon and humanity, will not be melted into compaſſion, and find ſomething to reply, when Rouſſeau tells him, "If my memory could be "extinct with myſelf, rather than reveal the "ſecrets of any one, I would ſuffer an unjuſt "and tranſient opprobrium without a mur-"mur; but ſince my name muſt live, it is my "duty to tranſmit with it, to poſterity, the "memory of the unfortunate man who bore "it, ſuch as it actually was, and not ſuch as "my malicious enemies have indefatigably "laboured to make it appear."

Who then, poſſeſſing any adequate idea of juſtice, witneſſing, as we all of us did, all that envy and malice had made him ſuffer—combining with that perſecution which even his death could not appeaſe—all that we owe to him individually, is what is due to the whole human race, and thoſe returns which he had every reaſon to expect; who, I repeat, will cenſure him for having confidently looked forward to poſterity—for having appealed from the unrighteous judgment of a degraded generation, to the purer tribunal of men regenerated by his morals, and the meditation of his works—for having

having ſimply revenged himſelf, by exhibiting on one ſide, his works, his intentions, his principles; and on the other, his evils, and their authors? "See what I have done for "them, and behold what they have done to "me."

LETTER II.

IN order, Madam, to determine our judgment on the Confeſſions, we muſt not only conſider their literary merit, but alſo their utility. A work of this kind, that is merely agreeable reading, would be unworthy of its Author.

The firſt advantage we may derive from this is—to learn to ſtudy—to examine ourſelves—to ſcrutinize narrowly all the receſſes—all the moſt ſecret ſprings of the heart. If, as Mr. Pope declares in his Eſſay on Man *, the knowledge of ourſelves is the only true ſcience, what book can bid ſo fair to inſtruct us, as one where a man of ſincerity makes the experiment upon his own interior—where, quitting univerſalities, and philoſophical abſtractions, he traces himſelf, watches himſelf with the moſt vigilant eye of obſervation, even from his infant games; and catches, in this tender age, the origin of his good, and the ſources of his

* And all our knowledge is ourſelves to know.
POPE's *Eſſay on Man.*

evil propenſities, developes all their progreſs, and finally exhibits an object which we neither find in books nor in ſociety—a human heart open to public inſpection.

From the courſe he has purſued, it neceſſarily reſults, that the principal utility of the work will be contained in the former part, where he inveſtigates and explains thoſe cauſes and principles, of which, in the latter part, we ſee the illuſtrations. With a ſimilar genius, whoſe appearance and blazing forth was equally ſlow and unexpected, ſhow me a young man, educated as Rouſſeau had been, and I will tell you what will be his taſte, his virtues, and his vices, when he arrives at maturity.

In this point of view, the firſt book of the Confeſſions may ſerve as a ſupplement and appendix to his Emilius. For example, the premature effect of the puniſhments of Mademoiſelle Lambercier, ſo contrary to the intention of her who inflicted them; the terrible confuſion—the forcible indignation which a ſimilar chaſtiſement by M. Lambercier himſelf, with all his force, produced in his infant mind—and the paſſion of an irritated maſter, who ſuppoſed he was puniſhing a fault, a lie, and a guilty defence of it, at the very moment when the unfortunate child, innocent of the fault for which he was ſo ſeverely puniſhed, rendered homage by his denials at the altar of truth, and perſiſted with ſuch unparalleled fortitude in denying what he could not own, without being guilty of a lie. Theſe two ſcenes, ſo very

diſſimilar,

diſſimilar, and many others about the ſame time, offer themſelves in illuſtration of many of his principles reſpecting the education of infants.

The above ſcene, which is contraſted by another, where, ſo far from being the martyr of truth, he is guilty of the baſeſt falſehood, and is only ſtedfaſt in caſting upon an innocent girl the theft of which he was himſelf guilty, furniſhes a leſſon yet more important. This crime, for ſuch he himſelf terms it—this crime, which, inſtead of attempting to palliate, he loads with all the aggravated circumſtances which can render it odious, and which, in the moments of his weary watchings, he himſelf retraces, though already an old man, with much keener anguiſh of remorſe than he declares he felt when he committed it—Recollect, that the perſon guilty, though but a child, was interrogated before a numerous aſſembly: that having firſt ſaid, through miſtaken pride, that he received from the girl the ribband which he himſelf had ſtolen; through miſtaken pride, he ſtill continued in the ſame aſſertion, when the girl was confronted with him before the ſame company: "Little," ſays he, "did I dread "the puniſhment—I dreaded nothing but the "diſgrace—but I dreaded it worſe than death "—worſe even than the crime—worſe than all "the world. I had nothing at the moment "before my eyes, but the horror of being diſ-"covered, and publicly, to my face, proved "and declared a thief, liar, and calumniator.

" An univerſal agitation deprived me of every " other ſentiment. If M. de la Roque had " only taken me aſide, and ſaid to me: *Do* " *not ruin this poor girl's reputation; if you are* " *guilty, confeſs to me:* at that moment, I am " perfectly convinced, I ſhould have proſtrated " myſelf at his feet. But they only intimi- " dated, when they ſhould have encouraged " me." I believe, Madam, it will be quite ſuperfluous to point out to your obſervation, the important leſſon compriſed in theſe few lines.

But though we may neither have to educate our own or other people's children, have we not all to educate and inſtruct ourſelves? This education, which endures all our life, where we always find ſomething to do, is only attainable from the experience we have of ourſelves, and the obſervations we make upon others. If the Confeſſions can be ſerviceable in the former of theſe ſtudies, they are not leſs ſo in the latter; ſince, in ſociety, men compoſing one maſs, never offer themſelves to our obſervation, but with reſerve, and under a degree of reſtraint; while here, on the contrary, the man entirely unmaſks himſelf, without reſtrictions, and without diſguiſe.

But he not only exhibits himſelf, and freely diſcovers himſelf ſuch as he really was, but he inſtructs us alſo how to draw concluſions from his Confeſſions. One moment, he expreſſes the great maxims of morality, ſuch as the following, the only one perhaps, adds he, that may

may be uſeful in practice, viz. " To avoid " ſituations which place our duty and our in- " tereſt in oppoſition; which ſhow us our own " advantage through another's misfortune;" or this equally true, and which we ought never to loſe ſight of, " That virtue coſts us no- " thing, but through our own imprudence; " and if we would be always wiſe, we ſhould " ſeldom be under the neceſſity of being vir- " tuous." At another moment, he pourtrays, in the moſt vivid tints, that interior diſſatiſ- faction, and the poignant reflections reſulting from the commiſſion of a fault—or that internal ſatisfaction and joy in a doubtful ſituation, and under a trying temptation, from having adhered to the cauſe of virtue, which leaves no embar- raſſment under ſimilar circumſtances, and in- ſtantaneouſly determines without leaving time for deliberation.

Sometimes he inſtructs, not only by his own experience, but by that of other wiſe men, whoſe voice he heard amidſt the ebullitions of youthful levity, and the tempeſtuous ſtorms attendant upon that giddy ſeaſon of life. Such was the worthy M. Gaime, whom he makes, in grateful acknowledgement, one of the originals in his Savoyard Vicar, and who would remark with ſo much propriety, " That " if every man could read the hearts of others, " there would be more perſons who would " wiſh to deſcend than to mount."

To this axiom, ſo ſimple, yet ſo well cal- culated to moderate inordinate deſires for rank and fortune, he himſelf adds another, no

leſs neceſſary to moderate the romantic and exaggerated traits even of virtue itſelf; which is, "That the enthuſiaſm of lofty virtues is "of little uſe in ſociety—that, in ſoaring too "high, we are more liable to fall—that the "continual ſucceſſion of ſmall duties, always "well fulfilled, demands no leſs force than "the moſt heroic actions—that we draw from "thence ſuperior ſources both of honour and "happineſs—and that it is infinitely better to "poſſeſs the general eſteem of men, than their "occaſional admiration."

In fine, as in the firſt part, every thing is either a leſſon or a temptation—a fall or a victory—all is precept; and what is of infinitely more conſequence, every thing is an example to the reader.—Poſſibly leſs inſtruction may be reaped from the ſecond part; but this is compenſated by that ingenious analyſis of our internal ſentiments—thoſe critical obſervations on the incentives to human action, and that love for ſimplicity and nature—that contempt of factitious pleaſures—that taſte for the country and a contemplative life, which alone conſtitutes wiſdom and true happineſs.

Let us leave, Madam, the enemies of Rouſſeau, to ſee nothing in all this, but the revelation of his faults—let them amuſe themſelves with citing them—let them collect them, and exaggerate, and form a bundle of poiſoned arrows to wound and abuſe his memory; we who are ſtrangers to hatred, to whom admiration is ſweet and ſoothing, and who do not believe that for ſome defects corrected, and

ſome

ſome virtues acquired, we have no longer any thing left to accompliſh in an art the moſt difficult, the moſt meritorious of all; we can ſee in his Confeſſions, what would contribute to our own advantage, rather than what would tend to injure him. Let us profit from the examples he furniſhes us with, either to avoid or purſue; and let us imitate his example, from his Confeſſions, thus publicly made, at the expence of vanity, ſincerely to make our own in private.

The difference I have remarked in the moral utility of the two parts of this work, appears alſo, though leſs perceptibly perhaps, in their literary merit. It is, that the one was written in the calm of retreat*, and far from every object which could torment his ſoul, or diſtract his imagination; the other, many years after, amongſt agitations—ſuſpicions—the pangs with which he was often tormented by imaginary perſecutions—the ſnares which he conceived always ſpread, and the vigilant activity of real hatred, exaggerated in his mind by the continual habitude and exceſs of miſery.

When theſe Confeſſions firſt appeared, you doubtleſs recollect having heard many, who did not paſs for the moſt fooliſh, abſolutely doubting whether they were actually written by Rouſſeau, not merely becauſe they wiſhed to call in queſtion the evil he reports of himſelf, but becauſe, as fine critics, they pretended they did not diſcover his ſtyle.

* In 1766, 67, 68. at Wootten and the Chateau de Trie.

Nothing can tend more to diſgrace the occupation of writing, than to obſerve how many read and judge without underſtanding. The ſtyle is not, indeed, the ſame here as in his eloquent or political publications; it is leſs connected, though probably equally finiſhed. The art, inſtead of appearing in the arrangement of words—the ſtructure—the diſpoſition and correſpondence of periods, exiſts in the vivacity—variety—the genuine touches, and neat ſimplicity of the turns. Whoever had only read his two diſcourſes upon *the Sciences*, on *the Inequality*, his *Social Contract*, and all his different pieces on political œconomy, would be perhaps excuſable in not diſcovering the identity of ſtyle in his Confeſſions; but whoever has read Eloiſa, Emilius, the *Letter upon Public Repreſentations*, and that to M. de Beaumont; will he not there acknowledge the ſame talent for painting great objects, and relieving the moſt ſimple—of analyſing the moſt expanſive, or the moſt ſecret ſentiments—of making the paſſions ſpeak their genuine language, following them in all their windings, ſubterfuges, and ſophiſms—to trace living portraits in action, and to render them ſtriking by their reſemblance—to ſeize the ridicule, and execrate the vice—to warm the imagination and the heart with the beauties of nature, by glowing, but faithful traits, which appear exaggerated only to thoſe who look at nature without obſervation; whoever, in a word, does not here again diſcover the ſame hand, the

the ſame pen, the ſame genius, ought to renounce reading for ever, or at leaſt forming any judgment upon what he reads.

What charms, and what truth, in the ſtories of his early youth—of his early friendſhip—of his firſt amours! We ſhould ſuppoſe we ſaw him before our eyes, by the ſide of his father, reading to him, during his work, either romances, or the heroes of Plutarch—almoſt all romantic to him, and, alas! even to us.—One would believe one's ſelf liſtening to the old ſongs of his aunt, whoſe remembrance recurred to him frequently in his old age, and again tranſported him with ſweet reiterated pleaſure.

We make another with him and his couſin Bernard, in the great and terrible exploit of immerſing the terrace.—With yet greater pleaſure we proceed with pretty little Mademoiſelle Goton, in their infant play, where ſhe condeſcended to perſonate his ſchool-miſtreſs; and in ſpite of the bad germ which began to diſcover itſelf in the affair of the apples, which ſhould, in priſon, have indemnified his maſter, the engraver, he has deſcribed it in a mode ſo laughable, that we partake all his motions, and inſtantly become his accomplices. When he is upon the road from Annecy to Turin, with the devout Sabran, and her friſky companion—I ſee them—I follow them—I am one in the journey: his reveries, and air-built caſtles, during theſe eight happy days, diminiſh the length of the way, particularly when I reflect that I have

more than once in my life dreamed ſimilar dreams.

And when we reflect that we have loved—when we feel we have a heart yet ſuſceptible of that tender paſſion, what a delightful deception we experience in the portrait of that ſenſible and modeſt Madame Baſil, at this ſcene of love,—modeſty and ſilence ſo exquiſitely touching! The youth upon his knees, extending his arms towards the object of his paſſion, without believing himſelf to be perceived!—The timid finger, which ſhe detaches from her work, and which points, with a ſimple motion, to a place at her feet, where fancy whiſpered us, We could be ſo happy!—the impetuous tranſport of the lover, ſuddenly checked by reſpect, and ſatisfied with ſimply kiſſing her hand, which he felt in trembling gentle preſſure on his lips! all theſe circumſtances remain in the ſoul, and can never be effaced.

It is very true, Madam, that to reliſh in the Confeſſions, and even the greater part of Rouſſeau's other writings, all the charms that are there ſcattered, it is neceſſary to poſſeſs genuine ſenſibility—a propenſity to reverie—ſound ideas, and ſimple taſtes—the fruit of an education far different from that which we receive at Paris. For this reaſon it is, that moſt people who in this country call themſelves his admirers, find, at the bottom, his opinions exaggerated—his deſcriptions romantic—and, by a train of conſequences, his ethics and principles extravagant; and at length conclude, that

that he, amongſt our philoſophers, who has told us moſt truths, has for a long time paſſed for nothing but a man of paradox.

When the ſphere of our knowledge has been confined within a college, or a convent, and afterwards extended to the opera, the palais-royal, the dreſs balls, the circles of Paris, and the promenades of Longchamps; how is it poſſible to form any idea of that charming day in the country, ſo innocently ſpent between a young man of ſenſibility, and two beautiful young ladies, in ſuch perfect freedom, and in that delightful ſeaſon when every thing invites to pleaſure? What is ſuch a day as this to a heart depraved by falſe enjoyments?—Two girls met on horſe-back, at the ſide of a brook, the water almoſt knee deep; their horſes led through by the young gallant, who, mounted behind one of the travellers, holds her faſt round the waiſt, but does not preſume, in the whole courſe of the journey, to put his hand upon her heart, though ſhe often repeated that the fear of falling cauſed it to palpitate—a breakfaſt, a dinner, equally delicate, ſeated upon wooden benches, and a three legged joint ſtool; cherries gathered from the tree, thrown down into the aprons, and ſome let drop into the boſom, and the reward of all this, an hand tenderly kiſſed.—What then, ſays Irony, is the amount of this fine party of pleaſure?

What is it!——Enquire of Jean Jacques—"Innocence of manners," he will anſwer you, "has a voluptuouſneſs well worth all the reſt—

" becauſe it has no interuption, and is conſtant-
" ly active; for my own part, I declare that the
" recollection of ſo charming a day touches me
" more—delights me more—comes nearer to
" my heart, than the recollection of any plea-
" ſures I have taſted in the courſe of life."——
What is it!——Ah! how much do I boaſt of my provincial education! It has let me into the ſecret of theſe ſweet and ſimple enjoyments. Theſe genuine pictures do not ſtrike my heart as extravagant images; they find there, ſimilar repreſentations, which have previouſly made me feel their charms, and with which they aſſociate and renew all their former vivacity.

If the days which they recal to my recollection are paſt, never to return, it is not the ſame with other pleaſures, where I can always find the ſame attraction, and the deſcriptions of which bring back to my memory nothing that I ſhould not yet wiſh to realiſe—amongſt the firſt I rank my promenades—my pedeſtrian excurſions. How well has Rouſſeau deſcribed all their charms!—Going—returning—to the right hand, or to the left—ſlackening or mending my pace—purſuing or avoiding beaten tracks—attempting others new and almoſt impaſſible—climbing a ſteep aſcent, and ſeated upon the eminence, from thence to take poſſeſſion of all ſurrounding nature—to looſe the thoughts—to wander unconfined—to form a proſpect of happineſs exactly to one's wiſh—to diſtribute around us all the beings we love—

to

to drop tears to the memory of thoſe who are no more——ſlowly to regain the road, and gradually to diminiſh, by accelerating our pace, thoſe melancholic ideas—and regain, from the contemplation of nature, that ſerenity which even that very contemplation had diſturbed; ſuch is what he, in twenty different places, deſcribes much better doubtleſs than I can do here. But the moſt convincing proof to me, of the excellence of his deſcription, is, that they retrace to the life what I have a thouſand times experienced, that, in my recollections, I frequently ſurpriſe myſelf in confounding his walks with my own.

That foaming — that thundering caſcade, which, in the environs of Chamberry, pours down with ſuch impetuous force upon the pebbly bottom of a precipice—I almoſt think I ſee it—he has deſcribed it ſo naturally, and I have ſo ſtrongly felt the ſtunning dizzineſſes which he amuſed himſelf in acquiring, by darting his ſight from aloft into this frightful abyſs, that my head almoſt turns at the bare recollection.

I certainly do not wiſh, either for myſelf, or any other perſon, in the ſituation in which he was, when in one of his journies from Lyons—deſtitute of every thing, and obliged to ſleep in the ſtreet: but what proves either the faſcinating charms of fancy, or the little real influence what is termed riches and poverty have upon the happineſs or miſery of life, is this reflection, which perhaps has occurred to you

as well as to me—the deſcription of that delightful night he paſſed in a path on the banks of the Rhone, ſtretched out upon a ſtone, and ſleeping in the open air. The young wanderer who was there ſleeping, the moment he awakes, falls to ſinging ſo merrily a cantata of Batiſtin, though he had not enough in his purſe to pay for a ſcanty breakfaſt, without the leaſt anxiety for his ſituation; quite alive to the objects around him, he felt nothing in his ſituation but a ſweet and quiet ſleep, enjoyed upon the banks of a river, in a cool ſummer's night, under trees melodiſed by the ſong of the nightingale—and, which is yet more, a chearful awakening—in the midſt of all that variety of objects which fine pieces of water, a luxuriant verdure, and delightful landſcapes, offer at once to the heart and the eye, in one of the fineſt of days——Never, in the midſt of all his magnificence, did the moſt wealthy prince of Aſia enjoy equal pleaſure.

But a happineſs diveſted of every illuſion, and which, even in the happieſt ſituation, was the moſt enviable, was his innocent and tranquil life at Charmettes. What man could ſay as he did, and could ſay it with that perſuaſive and touching ſimplicity, "I roſe with the ſun, "and was happy—I ſaw *Maman*, and was "charmed—I traverſed the woods, and the "extenſive plains—I wandered through the "vallies, I read, I reſted—I worked in the "garden, I gathered fruit—I aſſiſted in the

" houſe, and happineſs followed me every " where; it was inherent in nothing elſe; all " was in myſelf, it would not leave me for a " ſingle moment."

And even when in his more anxious years, and during his long misfortunes, he wiſhed, in ſpite of fate and men, to enjoy ſome happy moments—he ſheltered himſelf, in imagination, at Charmettes, and recalling to mind theſe golden, but fleeting moments, he hurried away to preſent miſery, by impreſſions, ever preſent, of paſt proſperity.

" *Ah! look at the periwinkles!*"——How well has he done in conſecrating this expreſſion! —it is one of thoſe expreſſions of the heart, which the head alone can neither ſpeak nor repeat. The emotion which he experienced from the ſimple ſight of this plant, and which he expreſſed in ſo lively a manner thirty years after, that his good and tender Maman had made uſe of the ſame expreſſion, *Look at the periwinkles!*—is ſufficient to prove how ſtrongly the ſmalleſt objects, during this fortunate period, had been previouſly grafted in his ſoul *.

* The effect of this moving expreſſion, at once proves the empire of genius, and that ſpecies of illuſtration which it can give to the moſt ſimple productions of nature: the flower of the periwinkle is very beautiful; but it has been little known, and people ſeldom enquire about it. But I underſtand from M. Desfontaines, profeſſor of Botany at the King's garden, that ſince the Confeſſions, every body, and particularly the ladies, have requeſted to ſee it.

And

And what was moſt charming in theſe impreſſions is, that, connected together by an uninterrupted continuation of ſenſation and enjoyments, they continue to follow and renew each other inceſſantly, every time that ſome accident, or ſweet dreams of fancy, recalled them again to his memory. I do not in the leaſt wonder that he ſhould delight ſo much to careſs ſome pigeons belonging to one of my friends, who was alſo his, and who had never reaſon to complain of him, becauſe he was never with Rouſſeau, neither tale-bearer, nor extortioner, nor traitor. He, doubtleſs, recollected his friends the pigeons which he had fed at Charmettes.

Notwithſtanding the inferiority which may be perceptible in the ſix laſt books of the Confeſſions, how many pictures, how many deſcriptions, make us feel the hand of a maſter! What other perſon could have given the ſame intereſt to the affair of Venice, to theſe concerts of ugly young perſons, whom he would have judged from their voices to be beautiful as angels, and whom he, at length, abſolutely figured to himſelf as ſuch, when ceaſing to ſee, and beginning again to liſten to them? What other perſon could have deſcribed, as he did, his agreeable retreat at the Hermitage, —his life at Montmorency—his languor after dreadful pains—his tranſports during the compoſition of his works—his flight after that ſhameful decree of the parliament, and the uninterrupted repoſe he enjoyed in the little iſle of

St. Peter, after being pelted with ſtones at Motiers?

Be not apprehenſive that I have forgot what has doubtleſs made a deep impreſſion on you—what in this rapid enumeration I had indeed omitted; and I have done ſo purpoſely, becauſe it is more ſtrongly impreſſed on my memory than any thing that has preceded it. You inſtantly perceive, that I allude to that impetuous paſſion which he firſt experienced at an age when moſt other men ceaſe to be ſuſceptible of it—but love was to him like genius, equally ardent as it appeared late. Not that he had not been long ago acquainted both with its ſweets and its enjoyments, but never with its torments or its tranſports; he had deſired, and enjoyed; but he had never truly loved.——Love—burning, imperious, tyrannical love, which can render us guilty and inſenſate, attacked Rouſſeau at the age of wiſdom.

If at this age his attachment could have been ſo ſtrong, it is ſtill more ſurpriſing that fifteen years afterwards, when turned of ſixty, he was able to retrace in his memory, with ſo much fire, and ſo much truth, all the agitations of his ſoul. In this part of the Confeſſions, the ſame pen which had written Eloiſa, reſumed its former fire.—What profound and rapid effects in an unexpected viſit, at a moment when his enchanted imagination dreamed of nothing but love and romance!—What conflicts of the heart, and what ingenious devices

of

of the head, pervade all his internal deliberations!——What an enchanting and innocent evening in the groves of Eaubonne!—What wildneſs of the pencil in theſe palpitations—theſe thrillings—theſe falterings which he in vain endeavoured to ſuppreſs during the road, or in the moment of their attack!—What diſorder, and what flame in the impetuous tranſports of nature, reſemblant in their effects to the love-melancholic illuſions of a dream! It is preciſely thus that one feels and paints love at twenty years of age: How then in his former writings, would he not have been the moſt eloquent apologiſt for women, although often their moſt ſevere cenſor—how, ſetting aſide all thoſe lendings which art miſapplied rather depreciates than ſets off, would he not have ſo well painted their natural graces—their ſweet faſcinations—their apparent delicacy, and their undoubted empire, if, even in the wane of his life, ſo much warmth yet animated his recollections?

But, to conſider the Confeſſions ſimply as a literary production, it is neceſſary that I ſhould ſay more. What fine and delicate traits—what various and affecting ſcenes—what an agreeable blending of intereſt and pleaſantry—and in what eloquent, lively, and pictureſque forms, are all theſe objects attired! What a gallery of portraits can I make paſs before your eyes, if, even without looking into the book, I ſhould here repreſent them to you as they occur to my memory!

There

There would be the ſparkling and winning Venture, and the Muſceian le Maître, ſo good a man that they called him *Little Cat;* and that hideous Lazariſt, who makes ſo ſtriking a contraſt with the affable M. Gatier, ſecond original of the Savoyard Vicar; and the racketing and hectoring Courtille—always in motion—always intruding—conſtantly bawling aloud; and the red coat and gold buttons of Mr. Bazile, which made Rouſſeau have an averſion to that colour all the remainder of his life; and M. Simon, chief juſtice, that gallant and literary dwarf, with his double pipe, ſometimes ſhrill and weak, at other days grave and ſlow, with his little, ſlender, ſhort body, pitched upon two long legs opening like a pair of compaſſes; and again, the ſtupid ambaſſador Montaigu, ſo vain, ſo flat, ſo greedy of his ſequins—the fellow from Mantua, whom he called his gentleman, and all the humorous characters of this ridiculous embaſſy—Carrio, and the amiable Altuna, and the honeſt parſon Maltou, the old friend of John Baptiſte Rouſſeau, full of reſpect for his memory—the canting Father Bertier, who ſmiled when they called him a good man, like Panurge buying ſheep of Dindenaud—the two crony newſmongers, chriſtened at Montmorency—*the goſſips*, and ſo many real or pretended friends—ſo many ſimple connections—ſo many dangerous enemies, who are all alive and active in theſe Memoirs, as in a drama.

But

But I ſhould never finiſh, and finiſh I muſt. It is but a letter that I ought to write to you; and to attempt to ſhow, in a ſingle letter, what remains of ſo long and intereſting a work, would, I feel, be really a folly.

LETTER III.

I HAVE now, Madam, to examine what opinion we ſhould entertain of the Author of theſe Confeſſions; this reſearch is certainly the moſt difficult, and the conſequent deciſion delicate to pronounce. As well the commendation, as the cenſures of Jean Jacques, have been a long time tinctured by exaggeration, or the vague declamations of hate or enthuſiaſm. The documents of the proceſs are at this moment in exiſtence, and in almoſt every perſon's hands. The faults of which Rouſſeau accuſes himſelf, are too ſtrongly coloured, to leave us any ground to believe he has been guilty of the leaſt diſſimulation: it is not therefore any particular report that muſt guide us; we muſt peruſe his Letters—we muſt read his Confeſſions.

It appears, then, that we have only to compare, and to judge impartially; but the moral agent who is the object of our examination, was ſo very complex, and preſents himſelf under ſo many different aſpects, that if it is ſo eaſy for hate and enthuſiaſm, blinded by their ſeveral prejudices,

judices, and aiming only to juſtify them, to ſelect, the one, all the meritorious—the other, all the cenſurable—and for each to pronounce blindly upon that which is oppoſite to his prejudices, it will be extremely difficult for an upright unprejudiced judge to pronounce an equitable judgment, and to give the definitive reſult of ſo many various ſentiments, actions, and contradictory propenſities.

We muſt firſt diſtinguiſh in Rouſſeau, two beings eſſentially different, one of which did not begin to exiſt till about the middle of his life; but they both had from that moment a very powerful influence upon each other. We muſt firſt conſider him as a man, afterwards as an author, and the compounded individual in which theſe two characters are blended. Do not, I entreat you, take offence at theſe diſtinctions and ſubdiviſions, of which you may perhaps ſee more: it is the only thread I have found to prevent my being bewildered in this labyrinth. My only fear is, that I ſhall not be able to ſay every thing now, and that I ſhall be obliged to dilate more than I could wiſh. I have in my eye nearly the goal where I ought to ſtop; but I do not, perhaps, diſtinctly diſcern all the length of the intermediate way.

When I advanced in my preceding letter, If you would give me a child educated like Rouſſeau, I would tell you his vices and virtues when arrived at maturity; I did not merely underſtand by that education, the leſſons of maſters,

maſters, but thoſe of things and events—leſſons far otherwiſe efficacious. The moſt eloquent diſcourſe does not perſuade—does not determine—produces in us neither good nor bad germs, but when undiſtracted by any other idea, by any other ſingular paſſion: we have beſtowed on it all our attention, and, if I may ſo ſay, given up our whole ſoul to its impreſſion. But ſuch attention being almoſt impoſſible for infants, exhortations, counſels, and precepts, all glide by unnoticed; while the event, or the exterior object, ſtrikes them, occupies them, intereſts their paſſions, and, giving the leſſon in this favorable moment, it is engraved deeply, and moſt frequently for ever.

Let an infant, free to run about where he pleaſes, and if he wiſhes to be excuſed from ever reading at all, find, under his hand, books which pleaſe and attach him; let him find, that in reading aloud to his father, whom he tenderly loves—he amuſes—he intereſts him, as much as he is amuſed and intereſted himſelf. Will not a taſte for reading, and a diſguſt for the amuſements peculiar to this age, be the natural conſequence?

And if theſe books, read with ſo much pleaſure, recollection, and continuation, ſhould chance to be romances, not indeed thoſe of the preſent day, but ſuch as made their appearance at the commencement of the preſent century, the romances of Scudery, of Calprénede, and the paſtorals of Durfé, would not the child, made

acquainted

acquainted with this ſupernatural and ideal world, before his being introduced to the real one; would he not, I ſay, acquire, perhaps in a manner never to be effaced, the habit of ſeeing men quite differently from what they really are, from being himſelf beyond their conception; would not this mode of education be ſufficient to exalt his ſentiments, and to give to all his virtues a tinge of the romantic?

If he is afterwards precipitated from theſe enchanting fictions into wretched realities; if an apprenticeſhip to a mechanical trade, and the brutal cruelties of a maſter, diſenchant and damp his ardor; if his evil ſtars drive him from his country, and he goes wandering at random, the victim to poverty, frowns, and repulſes—thrown into a vile hoſpital of catechumens, to abjure what he does not comprehend, in favor of what he does not equally underſtand; in a word, allured by a vain dream of fortune, which appeared to inſure his ſucceſs, if Bâcles, Ventures, and Greek Archimandrites, lead him away, and inſpire him with the ſpirit of adventure, perhaps more degrading than that of ſervitude—What abjectneſs of ſentiment—what confuſion of ideas—what vicious inclinations will not be the conſequence of theſe trials, which approach during the precious years of youth, to aſſail ſucceſſively a docile ſpirit, and from which very few minds, however ſtrong they may think themſelves, would have come out victorious!

But

But before these evil propensities have been too deeply rooted—before the first impressions of these romantic readings, and the perusal of the worthy Plutarch which followed, are totally effaced; in an age when the principles begin to establish themselves, when the character begins to be fixed, and the moral existence receives its last impression from surrounding objects, to preserve it for life—Open to this young man, whom you suppose thus to be lost, a salutary asylum, where he can forget his misfortunes; let him, in a country retreat, in the company of an agreeable woman, and the delightful union of all the sweets of independence, study and friendship, be employed, during many years, in storing his reason with sound ideas, his soul with tender sentiments, his understanding with useful knowledge; let a delicate state of health, an afflicting malady, followed by a languor which appears necessarily to conduct him slowly and gently to his tomb, show him the fallacity of human happiness, and, frequently by depriving him of all hopes of the morrow, habituate him to enjoy the present in its fullest extent, and to live from one day to another—What effects will be produced from this third arrangement? Though not sufficiently potent entirely to destroy the effects of the two preceding, it will, nevertheless, so modify them, that they will be merely accidental; whilst his own, more closely connected, more intimately blended with his natural inclinations, will become his very nature,

his habitual exiſtence, and the true ground-work of his character.

Thus born with a feeling ſoul, and an impaſſioned heart, but at the ſame time with a great fund of indolence, a kind of ſlowneſs of thinking, and more of willing, the young éleve of Charmettes will have acquired the habit of reſerving all the ardor of his deſires, and the forces of his will—for his ſolitary meditations—for his aſpirations after virtue—for ſtudies often obſtinate, and frequently fruitleſs.

His indolence and apathy will pervade all the attractions of fortune, ſocial diſtinctions, and the enjoyments of vanity. His natural timidity will be augmented in his retreat, as well as his diſguſt for all the important fooleries of ſociety: ſo that, when afterwards launched into the world, he will never poſſeſs either its tone, its eaſe, nor its inſignificant loquacity; not having had any commerce with men, he will never know man but by abſtraction, which will ſhow him always ſuch as he ought to be, and what he would have been if he had not diſfigured himſelf; he will always be led to contemplate extenſive civil ſocieties with eyes ſoftened by the evils, or injured by the vices, of which they offer a diſtreſſing ſpectacle; and his indignation will naturally be kindled againſt all thoſe obſtacles which men have placed in the way of their own happineſs; in a word, he will appear a miſanthrope, inſtead of being a philanthropiſt! All his taſtes will be ſimple,

—his

—his propenſities conformable to nature—his affections mild — his ſoul affectionate — his heart confident, but too delicately ſuſceptible to be proof againſt the ſlighteſt injury.

Draw him afterwards out of his retreat—abandon him to the vortex of the world—without any fixed plan, without any end propoſed—let him come to Paris with the determined deſire of making his fortune—let him mingle with the learned, and men of letters, to cultivate and diſplay his talents, and amongſt the rich, to endeavour to gain their influence and patronage; timid and reſerved, the natural conſequence of a life of ſolitude, what will he not have to ſuffer from the pompoſity of the former, and from the inſulting haughtineſs of the latter? Frequently obliged to ruminate himſelf internally, he will there recollect the elements of the three epochas of his life; from this time, leſs ſtruck with objects than recollections, he will never contract the pretended amiable vices of the capital, nor will he adopt the frigid or the falſe accompliſhments; he will never bend himſelf to thoſe convenient mummeries which we term cuſtom: that indolence which he received from nature, and the germ of which was fertiliſed by his life at Charmettes—the exaltation of his ſentiments, the fruit of his firſt admiration of the heroes of romance, and the great men of antiquity—his taſte for contemplative reveries, contracted in his numerous travels—and unfortunately, alſo ſome remains of evil principles

with which his mind was tinged during his years of misfortune and degradation—theſe will compoſe his moral exiſtence.

And this is juſt what Jean Jacques really was at Paris, till the moment when an unexpected effervescence lifted him from obſcurity to repoſe, and to himſelf—which was an honeſt man—a man of cultivated underſtanding, fond of letters and the arts, particularly muſic; poor, yet irreſolute to attempt what, with a little application, might have tended to make him rich; habitually good, humane, mild; neither announcing the elevation of genius, nor its principles; debaſing himſelf ſometimes to indolence, and ſuffering his ſoul to be weighed down, and unbent; in ſhort, incapable of any great effort, and yet very capable of a weakneſs; but without gall, without malice, without falſehood, without envy; inacceſſible to hate, malevolence, intereſt, or ambition, and every thing which makes man wicked, and renders him an enemy to man.

But is it really true that his genius was ſo ſlow as it appears to be, and as I have here ſuppoſed it, conformably to received ideas?

Let us not attempt to define Genius, which is, in its own nature, undefinable; but let us at leaſt acknowledge one of its properties, ſo inherent that you will ſearch for it in vain where it does not exiſt: it is that of ſeeing in objects, not only their diſtinct forms, and relations among themſelves, but an unexhauſtible fund of ideas and ſentiments, a peculiar order of

of beings, animated by the imagination, which ſpeak to the ſoul, and to which it anſwers by tranſports and thrillings abſolutely unknown, not only by folly or emptineſs, but even by the underſtanding itſelf, however fine, however educated, however adorned it may be; this property, in a word, conſtitutes one of the excluſive attributes of genius.

But it is ſuperfluous to remind you in how many parts of the Confeſſions we find inſtances of this faculty, which may be termed creative, even though not employed upon any determinate ſubject, and when ſuffered to remain unfruitful; ſince, giving a ſoul to what is inanimate, raiſing it above the rank of things exiſting, and diſengaging itſelf from the preſent, to dart into the future, it appears in effect to create another univerſe. In ſupport of this poſition, I ſhall only quote the following paſſage from the Fourth Book: "If, to fix all "theſe charming objects, all theſe delicious "ſentiments, I were to amuſe myſelf in de- "ſcribing them as I feel them—what fire of "the pencil—what delicacy of coloring— "what energy of expreſſion ſhould I give "them! They tell me, they find all this in "my works, though written towards the "decline of my life. Oh! had they ſeen "thoſe of my youth—thoſe I have made "during my travels—thoſe I have compoſed, "but never committed to writing——And "why, ſay you, did you not write them? "Why ſhould I? I ſhall anſwer. Why de-

" prive myſelf of the certain charm of enjoy-
" ment, merely to tell others that I had en-
" joyed? What ſignify to me—readers—the
" public—the earth, while I am hovering in
" the heavens?"

As the art of writing does not materially conſiſt in the exerciſe of the pen, but in the talent of imagining and painting; you may obſerve, that previous to his having compoſed any book, Jean Jacques had long been an author, and that his genius was far from being ſo tardy in its appearance as they imagine.

But his different eſſays, which are yet extant, prior to his Diſcourſes upon the Sciences, Letters, Memoirs, and Poems, every thing, is in perfect mediocrity: there is nothing that announces either the man of genius, or the good writer.——No more, I reply, than announces the character of a thinking and well informed man; yet notwithſtanding, his meditations, his lectures, and his various ſtudies at different periods, particularly during his reſidence with Madame de Warens, had all already acquired him a rich and an ample collection of ideas, and combinations of ideas.

The moment was not yet arrived, when, wounded on every ſide with the ſhafts of miſery, the fruit of ſocial inſtitutions, barbed by the tyranny and injuſtice of men in power, and convinced, from his commerce with the wiſe, of the inefficacy of the ſciences towards the attainments of happineſs and virtue; he was to collect all the contemplations—all the thoughts

thoughts—all the facts floating in his imagination and his memory; to draw from them the ſimple reſult of an uniform ſyſtem—to vanquiſh at length his natural indolence, and, not confining himſelf merely to write for himſelf, and record his obſervations in the volume of his brain, he was now to attempt the difficult art of writing for others—to convert his inſtinct into the reaſoning faculty, and, by a happy ſelection of models and objects of imitation, to compoſe for himſelf a method and ſtyle by others inimitable.

This moment at length arrived: an academical queſtion produced it. *Has the progreſs of the arts and ſciences contributed to corrupt, or purify the manners?* After the ſucceſſive developement of his ideas, and the habitual turn of his reflections, what would be expected to be his anſwer? Was he free in his choice? Could he not inſtantly diſcern, as it were, by a flaſh of light, the firſt link of a chain of demonſtrations and maxims, which were upon the point of unfolding to him, and by his voice, unfolding to the world, the ſource of their evils—the injuſtice of their complaints—and by what path they might yet return to happineſs?

Yet, notwithſtanding this, Diderot has had the impudence to aſſert, that it was he who diſſuaded Jean Jacques from ſupporting the affirmative of this queſtion, whilſt the negative had demonſtrably the moſt intimate connection with the preceding part of his life, and was but, as it were, the head of which all

his following works compoſed the body and members *; and good people who make pretenſions to the title of reaſonable perſons, believed and repeated this palpable falſity. Let them endeavour to make themſelves better acquainted with the eloquent and the ſublime perſon, who was indebted for his ſublimity and eloquence, to his own internal convictions: let them ceaſe to ſuppoſe, or believe, that with the ſole talent of writing, he had kindled in their hearts a fire, of which his own was but the focus and the center; and let them poſſeſs all the ſecrets of perſuaſion, without knowing it; and if they are not aſhamed of being unjuſt —let them at leaſt bluſh at appearing ridiculous.

In ſupporting, on this ſplendid occaſion, an opinion contrary to common ideas, he ſo followed the natural thread of his own, that they ſprung up and aſſailed him all at once; and, ſubjugated hereafter by their concentered force, he was no longer free, but to follow their influence. About this time, the place of the caſh-keeper to a Receiver-general was offered him. But how accommodate the ſeverity of his principles to ſuch a condition?—How inculcate, as he had uniformly reſolved, independance and poverty, amidſt the calculations

* When the Programma of the Academy of Dijon firſt appeared, he came to conſult me on the ſide he ſhould defend. "The ſide you muſt defend," replied I, "is that "which no other perſon will ſupport."—"You are right," replied he.——Eſſay on the Reign of Claudius and Nero.

of

of intereſt and financiering ſpeculations?—How chain to a money coffer, the author of Fabricius's Proſopopeia?——Behold then the coffer refuſed!—Jean Jacques, free and poor, ſtraining his ſentiments to the pitch of his ideas—reforming his habits, and his conduct, by the model of his opinions—ſelling his watch, and exclaiming in a tranſport of joy, Heaven be praiſed! I ſhall no longer have occaſion to know what o'clock it is; at length, chuſing the trade of copyiſt of muſic, that he might not be forced to convert into a trade the noble talent of writing.

In the heroic effervescence which poſſeſſed his ſoul, and which kept him at the ſame point during four or five years—he conſidered nothing more noble than to imitate the illuſtrious examples which had been the objects of his infant admiration.—Hence his public and declared enmity againſt the mountebanks and hypocrites of morality—his averſion for every ſpecies of ſubjection, particularly that reſulting from obligations—and the reſolutions he made, not only againſt all ſignal ſervices, but even all thoſe trifling good offices which the majority of perſons in the world beſtow with ſo much pomp, or ſo much awkwardneſs, for which they generally expect to be loaded with ſo much acknowledgment. Hence ariſes that apparent ſtiffneſs of character—that Cynic ruſticity which ſuddenly ſucceeds his native timidity;—and that diſpoſition to ſarcaſm inceſſantly excited all that contempt and ridicule

which ſociety, in theſe times of frivolity, corruption, and ſlavery, neceſſarily occaſions in a perſon looking down upon it from ſuch an eminence.

Amongſt ſo many men of letters, habituated to preſerve for their works the ſtiffneſs of their philoſophy—to ſoften it by their commerce in the world, and in a great meaſure, by a conduct analogous to the manners of the times, to aſk pardon for what is termed ſophiſtry and paradox in their books—could not he affect to ſtrike with his eccentricity, and play the ſame character; more particularly, becauſe in his life, and in his writings—he never acted any thing—he diſguiſed nothing—nothing could bias him; and he could not mould and faſhion his ſoul either to feign ſentiments he had not, or to varniſh thoſe which he poſſeſſed in the richeſt abundance.

The prize obtained by this diſcourſe, rendered the Academy the object of public attention. His eloquence was univerſally admired, but his opinion paſſed for a mere *jeu d'eſprit*. From that moment they began to criticiſe what they did not comprehend—pamphlets were written againſt him, where they, in general, anſwered every thing but the point in queſtion.—He replied vigorouſly to M. Gautier, of Nancy, who was ſcarce worth the trouble, and to M. Borde, who, ten years before, had termed himſelf his friend, and who ſo little pardoned his veracity, that ten years afterwards he became one of his violent enemies;

mies; and finally, to the good King Staniſlaus, who, with a little aſſiſtance from Father Menou, afforded Rouſſeau the ſingular ſatiſfaction of refuting, at once, a King and a Jeſuit.

But all theſe criticiſms were much more deciſively anſwered by his diſcourſe *upon the origin of inequality amongſt men*—a work, the ſubject of which the academy evinced their courage in propoſing, but wanted the fortitude to adjudge the prize where merited. Here, as his flight was more lofty, fewer were capable of following him. There, deſcribing man leaving his native foreſts, to build towns, and to unite in ſocieties; they accuſed him with having ſaid, that he muſt quit his habitation in cities, diſſolve civil ſociety, and return again into the woods. From Voltaire's having wrote to him, that, in reading his work, he conceived a deſire for walking upon all fours, it was generally received, that Rouſſeau wiſhed to urge man to walk in this manner, doubtleſs becauſe he had himſelf naturally demonſtrated, that in the moſt ſavage ſtate man was neceſſarily a biped.

You ſee, then, from his mode of compoſing this work, the illuſtration of what he ſays of his youthful reveries, from which he never ſwerved, but in having no end fixed; of being the object of a labor, and not of a ſimple amuſement; and at length, of being written to form works perhaps more eloquent than any that have yet ſprung from his pen.

To meditate on this great ſubject—he neither conſults men nor books—he does not ſhut himſelf up in the obſcure circle of a cloſet—he is going to plead the cauſe of Nature—it is for her to inſpire him—it is into her boſom that he throws himſelf—it is to the woods, the firſt habitation of men, that he repairs to enquire how they came out of them. Retired for a week at St. Germain, he plunges into that ancient and ſpacious foreſt: habituated from this moment to concenter—to bound—to command his ideas,—he blends the deliberative progreſs of meditation with the fire of enthuſiaſm; in thoſe unfrequented paths, among thoſe venerable oaks, which appear cotemporaries with the world—he ſeeks—he finds the image of the primitive times, and boldly traces their hiſtory.

"My ſoul," ſays he, "exalted by theſe "ſublime contemplations, approximates to "the divinity; and ſeeing from thence, my "equals following the blind road of their "prejudices—their errors—their miſeries, and "their crimes, I cry to them with a weak "voice, which they will not hear—inſenſate "who are inceſſantly complaining of nature—"learn that all your evils ſpring from your-"ſelves."

In an eulogy of Rouſſeau, we ought deliberately to examine all his works, and analyſe the ideas of the author, conſider the end—the plan of each—their analogies—and that admirable unity which makes every thing converge in the

the demonſtration of a ſingle truth—the develope-ment of a ſingle thought. In theſe letters, appropriated peculiarly to you, I have not ſo great an ambition. To fulfill ſuch an undertaking, would require an entire work—it would be here too great a digreſſion; and I muſt remind you, that I have promiſed to confine my remarks to the Confeſſions. Yet I find, in the courſe of this occupation, a thouſand intereſting particulars, which I regret my not being able to give you in this too haſty ſketch. Theſe are the principal facts of the life of Rouſſeau, conſidered as an author: they are precious commentaries, which reflect new light upon ſuch pleaſing texts, and which, in their turn, give the laſt ſix books of the Confeſſions a great advantage over the firſt.

In proportion as freſh generations ſhall ſucceed the preſent, and elongate themſelves from the time when Jean Jacques was in exiſtence—what relates to his perſon, and to his good and evil propenſities, may perhaps perſonally depreciate him;—but it will be far otherwiſe with his genius—the circumſtances from which his principal works derived their origin, and which have, properly ſpeaking, ſurrounded their cradle.

In all ages, for ages the moſt remote will contemplate—will admire Rouſſeau, when all but the names of his detractors ſhall be forgotten:—they will ſay, it is in a charming ſolitude—they will remark, it is in the delightful retreat of the Hermitage and Montmorency, that

that this great painter of nature, almoſt conſtantly alone with his model, traced her portrait—found its character, ſo long loſt, and its laws effaced—it was there, that nurſing his ſweet ideas, a ſoul abſorbed in the deſire of *loving*—collecting around him in his extatic walks—at the return of the ſpring—at the firſt ſong of the nightingale, and amidſt the returning verdure!—angelic beings—ſuch as he had never found upon earth; perſonifying the two idols of his heart, love and friendſhip, in a Julia, a Clara, a St. Preux, and tranſporting himſelf with theſe to the borders of that fine lake, Leman, the picture of which was ever preſent to his memory; he became the confident of their loves, while he wrote almoſt under their own dictating, ſome detached letters of his Eloiſa—without order—without connection—without any other deſign than giving vent to the fulneſs of his heart; that, in ſhort, ſubdued by an impreſſion, whoſe faſcinating charms, not even the mourning of nature—the rigors of autumn, nor even the inclemency of winter itſelf, could enfeeble; he ſubmits his wandering and delightful reveries to a regular and connected ſyſtem, and, not without ſome reluctance, relaxes the auſterity of his philoſophy, to compoſe a romance.

But, notwithſtanding, the character of the writer of romance could never efface that of the philoſopher. He pourtrayed a young girl, overcome through weakneſs—after intereſting us even by that very weakneſs—riſing a woman

man ſuperior to her paſſions, inacceſſible to the more mild temptations of love, and regaining the narrow path of virtue; an example to thoſe who having once deviated, are too apt to ſuppoſe themſelves irretrievably loſt. He was anxious to re-kindle amongſt a corrupted people, in a corrupted age, that reſpect for a ſacred connection, too often the ſport of vice; and for the domeſtic manners of which it forms the baſe, in the ſame manner as domeſtic manners form the baſe of ſocial virtues. At a period when the intolerance of fanaticiſm had rendered even ſcepticiſm itſelf intolerant, he eſſayed to reconcile, by the mildeſt, the moſt agreeable methods, the two inveterate parties, by the ſenſible and rational piety of Julia, and the indulgent and humane ſcepticiſm of Madame de Wolmar. In fine, by the admirable painting of a country life, and its pleaſures, he continued to fulfill his philoſophic miſſion, by uniformly demonſtrating, that a remedy exiſted in nature againſt all the evils which a ſtate of ſociety brings upon man.

It is at Montmorency that, anxious for Geneva, which was yet his country, at the project of an eſtabliſhment, which he conceived formed to corrupt it—his heart yet filled with a fruitleſs paſſion, and weighed down by diſorders, which made him believe his end was approaching, in the midſt of a ſevere winter, in an iſolated dungeon, expoſed to the wind and ſnow, with no other fire than that in his heart, he wrote to D'Alembert, that eloquent letter,

letter, in which the maxims of ſevere virtue are ſoftened by a tint of melancholy, which was the conſequence of the ſtate of his mind; yet more cloſe than ever in his arguments, he addreſſes the heart as well as the head.—Here the danger of public repreſentations in a ſmall republic, is abſolutely demonſtrated by arguments, paradoxical only to thoſe who continually frequented the theatres of Paris; where, for the firſt time, for Heloiſe had not yet appeared, they diſcovered, in the moſt inflexible enemy of the vices and caprices of men, the ſenſible admirer of women. Though ſometimes the ſevere cenſor of every thing which tends to depreciate the virtues of the ſex—deſtroys its attraction, and weakens its empire; yet the delicate adorer, who only deprives them of a fictitious influence, beſtowed by a corrupt ſociety, to reſtore them all that they poſſeſs in a well regulated ſociety, and what they can only voluntarily abdicate, ſince they hold it from nature.

It is from Montmorency that goes forth, for the everlaſting illumination of man reſpecting his rights, and to ſerve as a pharos to bold legiſlators, this Social Contract, which, under an arbitrary government, appeared little dangerous, becauſe incomprehenſible, and regarded only as a political reverie, a dream however realiſed by the abolition of that abſurd inſtitution. There leaving the paſſions, he appears only anxious to demonſtrate, and ſtrike with conviction:—he is auſtere, ſolemn, and

conciſe, as the law.—He abandons all locality, all prejudice, all ſyſtem, and, recurring to the primitive eſſence of human ſociety, he ſnatches nations, not only from the yoke of their immediate tyrants, but from that of falſe writers on juriſprudence, the hirelings of deſpotiſm.

THE UNALIENABLE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE PEOPLE—THE INHERENT RIGHT OF REPRESSING, BY FORCE, THE ASSUMED RIGHT OF THE MOST POWERFUL—THE GOVERNED RE-ESTABLISHED IN THEIR PREROGATIVES, USURPED BY THE GOVERNORS—THE EQUALITY OF RIGHTS, FOUNDATION OF ALL LAWFUL ASSOCIATION.—Such is the doctrine he has been hardy enough to maintain in France, where the people, far from being regarded as ſovereign, was degraded beneath the condition of ſlaves; where the prevalence of opinions had deſtroyed the force, inherent and real; where a government, rapacious, ſcandalous, deſpotic, ſported equally with the property—the manners—the laws, and liberty;— where diſtinctions were miſtaken for rights—where theſe reciprocally claſhed with each other, and weighed all together upon the people: Obſerve then, in ſuch a ſtate of things, upon what baſis he had the fortitude to eſtabliſh the impreſcriptible title of all people to liberty: AND THESE VERY PRINCIPLES, SOONER OR LATER, WITH

WITH MORE OR LESS LOCAL MODIFICATION, WILL TERMINATE BY RESTORING LIBERTY TO ALL THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD*!

In fine, it is at Montmorency that this code of education, ſanctioned by nature, was originally ſketched: that code immortal, which, from its origin, had the force of law, in ſpite of the ariſtocratic influence of colleges, who, though they termed it impracticable, was univerſally practiſed, which delivering infancy from thoſe barbarous ſhackles which fettered it, from that pedantic mode of education which debaſed it, recalled to their duties, and to their ſweeteſt

* I am aware of thoſe objections, drawn from his opinion, relative to the repreſentation of the people, and the incompatibility of the exiſtence of liberty in a large extent of country; but to differ with him upon theſe, and ſome other points, is only proving, that we admit the validity of what he has advanced in other reſpects. Certain critics may in vain aſſert, that if Rouſſeau could return again to the world, *he would be ſtunned with the homages they now pay him.* (Political paſſage in the French Mercury, 1790. No. 27.) If he could return to the world, he would doubtleſs admit, that in doing much for the cauſe of ſociety, he has ſtill left much to be done; and he would admit, that liberty, though not perhaps in ſo high a degree, might yet relatively and ſufficiently be enjoyed by great ſtates; in the ſame manner as after having heard Orpheus, he confeſſed, in contradiction to what he had previouſly aſſerted, that muſic was not incompatible with the French tongue. He would only have been ſtunned, on hearing a foreigner—a Genoeſe, decrying the French conſtitution, before it was completed, and indecently inveighing againſt it, and its founders, in weekly publications.

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and moſt endearing pleaſures, mothers led aſtray by the diſſipation of the world, and even ruled them ſo abſolutely, that in France, where faſhion is deſpotic, maternal love became the mode.

As ſoon as this work made its appearance, What, exclaimed ſome, is the advantage of theſe ſpeculative ſyſtems? Not then foreſeeing all the conſequences, one might be embarraſſed, perhaps, ſo clearly to anſwer. But in obſerving, amongſt well-educated people, the love of equality and liberty—reſpect for the people and uſeful profeſſions—contempt for the falſe knowledge of the ſchools, and the tinſel of what is termed fine wit—for the falſe ſplendor of diſtinction, at this day almoſt univerſally ſpread abroad—the endowment of reaſon, natural to man, where he does not himſelf obſtruct it; and particularly the ſpirit of toleration, which has at length deſtroyed that of perſecution, even amongſt thoſe religiouſly inclined; the eſtabliſhment of theſe doctrines affords the moſt ample evidence of the happy effects of this great revolution in our morals, which paved the way for our political regeneration: if any one ſhould enquire the immediate cauſe of this, we may confidently reply, 'Tis *Emilius*.

But your ſex, Madam, is perhaps yet more indebted to him than ours.—Would not the creator of a Julia, the perſon who gave her a Sophia for her ſiſter, would not he have all the ladies in his favour? ——Sophia is the woman of nature—completed by a wiſe domeſtic education:

cation: ſhe is the model which we ought to imitate, although we can ſcarce hope to equal it. It is the unanſwerable reply to every philoſopher who would have women the ſame as men; and who is there that does not diſcover in the ſexual difference, the ſource of all the ſocial diſtinctions betwixt the two ſexes?

If the work entire is a maſterpiece, we may remark in the fifth book, a charm of ſtyle—a luxuriance of ſentiment and imagery, perhaps ſuperior to all the reſt. I know, that the ſubject, congenial to the heart and the imagination, would ſuffice to inſpire a writer of equal ſenſibility, that if Pygmalion could be enamoured with Galatea, it would be impoſſible for Rouſſeau to form Sophia—to ſee her progreſſively advancing and improving every day under his hands, without being captivated, and communicating to his ſtyle the impreſſion of the emotions of his heart. But there is yet another ſource for the colouring diffuſed over this intereſting part of the picture: you recollect that pretty building, called the Little Chateau, originally conſtructed by the celebrated Le Brun, which, encircled by ſhrubberies and pieces of water, appears like an inchanted iſle, or reſembles the *Iſola-bella*, the moſt beautiful of the three Borromean Iſles in the greater lake *. It was here that M. and

* Such is in abridgment the idea given by Rouſſeau, of this charming ſpot, for ſuch it actually muſt have been at that time. I viſited it myſelf laſt ſummer. The building, which is

M. and Madame de Luxembourg gave an appartment to Rouſſeau, during the whole ſummer: it is, ſays he, in that profound, but delicious ſolitude, that in the midſt of woods and water, the concerts of all kind of birds, and rich perfumes of orange flowers, that I compoſed, in a continued ſtate of extatic tranſport, the Vth Book of Emilius; and I am indebted, in a great meaſure, for its fine colouring, to the vivid impreſſions I received from the ſurrounding beauties of the place where I wrote it.

It is upon awaking from this extatic trance of genius, fired by the diſplay of nature, and glowing with philanthropy, that the author of Emilius, perſecuted, proſcribed, fugitive——This is, doubtleſs, one of thoſe unpremeditated occaſions when a man, not having time to prepare himſelf, nor diſſemble, ſuffers

is in the beſt taſte, is not defaced, though it has been long uninhabited; but the waters are either dried up, or ſtagnant—the bowers and grottos are in ruins, and the walks and lawns covered with buſhes and brambles—the trees aged, bending at their ſummits, almoſt all bear thoſe marks of decay inflicted by time as ſymptoms of deſtruction. But, notwithſtanding this general devaſtation, it is eaſy to imagine what the ſpot was thirty years ago. Now, this very diſorder even adds to thoſe profound, melancholic, and almoſt religious ideas, with which we are there impreſſed. ——Thanks to two ſenſible and amiable women with whom I made this pilgrimage, who, though they did not appear extravagantly delighted, and neither made fine ſpeeches, nor permitted me to make any; yet I diſcovered their eyes moiſtened like my own, when turning to them, after a long reverie, in which they had long, ſeparately and ſilently been rapt like myſelf.

himſelf

himſelf to appear in his true character; one of thoſe teſts where philoſophy and wiſdom would be excuſable in yielding to. We ſhall ſee, in my following letter, how Jean Jacques acquits himſelf, and the conſequences that may be drawn from the ſtate of his ſoul on this trying occaſion. We ſhall there ſee many other occurrences, if you are not more fatigued in following me through theſe particulars, than I am in writing them. What ſhall I do, Madam? this fertile ſubject irreſiſtibly extends itſelf under my pen, and I fear I ſhall quit it with the mortification of having left more to ſay than I have yet ſaid.

LETTER IV.

ALL that regards, Madam, the publication of Emilius, and its catastrophe, is most worthy of curiosity in *the Confessions* There we discover what difficulties Jean Jacques had experienced—what effects of memory, and combinations he had framed, to explain to himself in a satisfactory manner, by what cruel contrariety that which he had reasonably considered as the most valuable present he could possibly bestow on the world, should be stigmatized with such a return.

There it is, that invisible web, in which he fancies himself in the end entangled, and whose force he exaggerates more than its actual existence, begins to twine itself around him. It is Madame de Luxembourg who desires him to publish his book in France, at a period when he himself believed it to be imprudent even to ask simply its toleration. It was the respectable magistrate who then superintended the publishing department—it was M. de Malesherbes who wrote to him personally,

that the Vicar's Profeſſion of Faith would not only meet with the approbation of the public, but, at that period, even with the countenance of the court.—It was Madame de Luxembourg again who took upon herſelf the charge of the manuſcript—the engagement with the bookſeller Ducheſne, and who tranſmits to Rouſſeau the agreement re-copied by the magiſtrate's ſecretary. Rouſſeau had expreſsly announced, that the firſt edition ſhould be publiſhed in Holland—he recollects this as ſoon as poſſible, and when the manuſcript is no longer in his poſſeſſion, another is, at the ſame time, prepared at Paris, but with the approbation, and under the inſpection of the principal ſuperintendant of the bookſellers. Six months are waſted in experiments on paper—in ſize—in types—ſending and returning ſheets—every thing moves on tardily, yet to all external appearance with certainty. Duclos alone, the honeſt, the blunt Duclos, when he heard the Vicar's Profeſſion of Faith firſt read, could not help exclaiming to Jean Jacques: "How, "Citizen!—why, this is part of a book print-"ed at Paris, do me the favor to inform no "body that you have read this to me."

In the mean time, the printing of Emilius is entirely ſuſpended. Rouſſeau is uneaſy—he underſtands that a Jeſuit has ſpoken of his book, and has quoted paſſages from it.—Guerin, his bookſeller's agent in Holland, is a friend to Jeſuits:—the Abbé de Grave, commiſſioned by M. de Maleſherbes, to inſpect

this edition, is alſo a friend to the Jeſuits:—thus was his imagination heated; and, ſeeing nothing but Jeſuits, he founds on this baſe a chimera of diſquietudes. M. de Maleſherbes and Madame de Luxembourg at length reſtore and encourage him, and the printing proceeds—the leaves formerly cancelled are demanded for the two firſt volumes, and what is very ſingular, the laſt meets with no oppoſition.—Emilius at length makes its appearance—it paſſes, but without eclat—none of the Author's friends are bold enough to applaud it openly. One writes to him without ſubſcribing his name, as uſual—another begs him, without ceremony, to anſwer his note. A Counſellor, after reading the work, obſerves, that it will be ſpoken of in a ſhort time, perhaps more than the Author could wiſh. Rouſſeau, conceiving himſelf ſure of the countenance of Madame de Luxembourg, and the miniſter, keeps quiet, and fears nothing.

He is not, however, permitted to remain long in this ſtate—reports and fermentations increaſe—M. de Luxembourg gives him to underſtand, that he did wrong in characteriſing M. de Choiſeul, though favorably, in the Social Contract, which was alſo on the eve of publication.—Madame de Boufflers wiſhes him to depart, and already mentions England, and Mr. Hume—they talk to him of a parliament—of a decree—of the Baſtile:—he yet ſtands his ground—a billet is diſpatched by night from the Prince of Conti, by M. de Luxem-

bourg—he muſt fly directly—at ſeven o'clock the next morning, the decree to ſeize his body will be iſſued againſt him—they will ſeize him inſtantly—but the Prince has obtained for him, that he ſhall not be purſued, if he departs.—— Read again all the particulars of this nocturnal ſcene, and the manner in which they ſucceed each other, after ſome circumſtances of adieus and departure; it will appear to you, as well as it does to me, that Rouſſeau was not deceived in this affair: it will appear to you very probable, that they only wiſhed to intimidate and force him to fly, and that he would abſolutely have diſcountenanced all this parliamentary—fanatic, miniſterial cabal, if he had boldly oppoſed the ſtorm:—but in remaining, he muſt have been reduced to the alternative of lying, which he never did with premeditated deſign, however he might have been thereto ſurpriſed through weakneſs or inadvertence, or to expoſe perſons whom, notwithſtanding their deſertion, and perhaps worſe, he ſtill continued to reſpect *.

He departed alone, poor, afflicted—treated as a criminal for having lifted up his eloquent voice as an advocate for humanity—for reaſon, and for virtue.——What bitter reſentments would not have agitated the boſom, not abſo-

* See in the Xth and XIth Book of Confeſſions, all the hiſtory of the publication of Emilius, and the beginning of a letter to M. de Maleſherbes, in the laſt collection, publiſhed by M. du Peyrou.

lutely

lutely of a wicked perſon and villain, as he has been termed by his enemies, but of the moſt mild, and the leaſt malignant of thoſe who have thus ſtigmatized him. He is, however, occupied with ſentiments far different from thoſe of revenge.—At night, before he ſlept, according to his uſual cuſtom, he read ſome paſſages of the Bible. He had read through the chapter of Judges, which contains the horrible adventure of the Levite of Ephraim. The recollection of this, and the Idylls of Geſner, which appeared ſome ſhort time after, mingle and confound themſelves in his mind ſo ſtrongly, that he begins almoſt mechanically to compoſe in his Voiture, a poem upon this dreadful hiſtory. He furniſhes three cantos in three days; and the attractive ſweetneſs of his ſtyle—the ſimple paintings—the original ſimplicity, which pervade this little work, and which contraſt themſelves equally with the horror of the ſubject, and the miſery of his ſituation, prove more deciſively than any thing that can be ſaid on the ſubject, how much he was incapable of hate or reſentment.

This tract proves alſo another truth extremely conſoling; it is—that it is leſs eaſy for ſpiteful, malicious, and perſecuting perſons, than they ſeem to believe, to diſtreſs an honeſt man, and particularly a man of genius.—The triumph of Jean Jacques' enemies was not without diſquietude.—The celebrity of their victim, and the knowledge of his power,

which, if once directed againſt them, muſt have inevitably cruſhed them, was no inconſiderable drawback upon their exultation. Far, —very far were they from thinking, that, calm in his flight, and abſorbed in pathetic fictions—far from making them the ſole object of his thoughts, he did not ſo much as think about them; and that upon arriving at the place of his exile, he had abſolutely forgot its authors. Thus, by perſecuting, and apparently reducing him to the moſt abject ſtate, they afforded him an exquiſite treat of enjoyments, and ſoothing reflections, which gave him occaſion to remark *: "The Levite of Ephraim, "if not the beſt of my works, will always be "the moſt eſteemed. Never have I yet read, "never ſhall I read it again, without feeling "an internal approbation of an heart without "gall, which, far from becoming reproach-"ful from its misfortunes, conſoles itſelf with-"in, and finds in itſelf the ſureſt reſource and "counterpoiſe againſt oppreſſion." How much muſt he have experienced this internal approbation, that ſweeteſt reward of virtue, when, three years afterwards, haraſſed by prieſts, and ſtoned by the populace, he had quitted Motier Travers for the little iſle of St. Peter! There, while in France, Holland, Berne, Geneva, Neufchatel, they burnt his books—they calumniated his perſon; when the pamphlets and journals breathed carnage againſt him—

* Confeſſions, Book XI.

when

when Europe re-echoed with the torrent of anathemas and abuſes thundered abroad againſt him—occupied by cool and innocent amuſements, forgetting his enemies, and the inſults they had already inflicted, or thoſe they could yet inflict—he ſpared himſelf the moſt afflicting torment of all—that of hating. —Solitary herboriſations—charming walks, or the pleaſure of moving at random in a boat, upon a fine lake—without any fixed purpoſe, —without guide—and there to meditate—lying at length, with his arms folded upon his breaſt, and his eyes directed towards heaven —the pleaſure of founding a colony of rabbits, or the particulars of ruſtic cares, and country occupations, delightfully employed his days.

In reading his correſpondence, obſerve him in all his diſlodgments, even after his departure from England—to Trie—to Bourgoin —to Monquin—continually haraſſed by ſome perſecution—always exaggerating the implacable reſentment of his perſecutors; ſtill, however, he uniformly forgets them, and delivers himſelf up to nothing but the indolence of his character—the ſimplicity of his taſte, the moment he is arrived in a new aſylum, where he believes he may be ſafe from perſecution.

During the winter, at the caſtle of Trie, unable to find in botany thoſe agreeable diverſions which were then neceſſary to diſſipate his mind, what is his ſuccedaneum?—Repreſentations, where he could be alone in a corner, and weep as he pleaſed—muſic, which might, in ſome meaſure,

ſure, re-animate his over-loaded heart; this he finds neceſſary to efface all his diſagreeable impreſſions, and bring him back to his plants, which he has too long forſaken *.

What is his occupation at Bourgoin, at Monquin, even after the indecent ſcene of this apoſtate Thevenin, to betray him to juſtice, and to maintain that he had given him alms †? —Still he forgets all—he goes and gathers herbs—he augments his ſelection—he plays at draſts; and when he is attacked by feveriſh ſymptoms, and even his plants amuſe him no longer, he receives compenſation for the loſs of his once favourite amuſement, by ſinging ſome ſtanzas of Taſſo: "It is aſtoniſhing," ſays he ‡, "what a charm I find in this poem, "with my poor, broken, and already falter-"ing voice.—I yeſterday burſt into tears as I "was ſinging the hiſtory of Olinda and So-"phronia—if I had but a little ſpinette to "aſſiſt my feeble voice, I ſhould ſing from "morning to night."

In his late reſidence at Paris, when he was not haraſſed by freſh alarms, how peaceable and innocent were his amuſements! Was he not continually occupied with botany, that ſcience of innocent ſouls; and muſic, that favourite art with hearts of ſenſibility? This is

* Letter to M. the Marquis de Mirabeau.

† See upon this ſtrange ſcene, from which many inferences may be drawn, ſome letters of the ſame year, particularly in the new public Collection by M. du Peyrou.

‡ Letter to M. Lalleard, November 1768.

alone

alone ſufficient to prove, that, in his old age, amidſt all the perplexities with which his malevolent opponents had harraſſed him, he was yet the innocent—the tender-hearted Jean Jacques of Charmettes and the Hermitage. (See Note A, at the end of this Letter.)

Yet ſo many irrefragable proofs of the moſt firm integrity were not ſufficient to diſarm blind and implacable malevolence, and Jean Jacques was ſtill a *villain!* and thoſe only were good and virtuous, who had expelled from France that philoſopher, to whom France is, in a very high degree, indebted for her preſent liberty. The appellation of good was appropriated to thoſe excluſively who had cauſed him to be baniſhed from Geneva—from his native country; who had beſieged him in an aſylum where all the power of the Great Frederic could not protect him; who, confined within the narrow bounds of a wretched little iſland, the philoſopher, whoſe glowing writings recalled all Europe to natural ſentiments, and the cultivation of ſocial virtues—and drove him to England, and even there purſued him—thoſe who, in his declining age, would not give him time to breathe, from their malevolent perſecutions, and at length drove him out of his ſenſes; and who, after having plunged this fine genius into the madneſs of miſery and deſperation, had yet the brutality to reproach him with the deplorable effects of their malice.

I have now, Madam, no reaſon to retract what I have advanced; I ſpeak no more hypo-

thetically of the hatred and perſecutions of thoſe whom the unfortunate Rouſſeau termed his enemies and perſecutors: Doubtleſs, towards the cloſe of his life, he generaliſed too much their under-hand practices—their machinations, the effects of their calumny on the public opinion, and that which he conſiders as a whole generation combined againſt him. But, without penetrating here into the gloom of this obſcure intrigue, let us ſeize only the principal traits of that which came to light, even before the Confeſſions, and let us ſee if there is not ſufficient to elucidate what followed.

I throw entirely out of the queſtion that which he terms power, which was at one time the cauſe, at another the inſtrument of his misfortunes; that was inceſſantly put in motion to deſtroy; without this, it appeared to him impoſſible to explain the arret of Parliament, and every exertion to terrify—to bias—to conſtrain him to depart; and the deſertion of thoſe who urged him to publiſh Emilius in France, and had thereby precipitated him into ſo diſagreeable a predicament; and the decree illegally pronounced at Geneva, nine days after that of Paris; and the greateſt part of theſe ſufferings which purſued, wherever his wandering deſtiny conducted him. DESPOTISM is vaniſhed, and its outrages have alſo diſappeared; and the names of thoſe who availed themſelves of this deſtructive engine, are now conſigned to hatred, contempt, and oblivion.

But,

But, amongſt the moſt celebrated names, there is unfortunately one whom I wiſh to paſs unnoticed, when ſpeaking of the enemies of Jean Jacques—but his enmities have made too great a noiſe that their remembrance ſhould be eaſily effaced—the opinion of the renowned vibrating between the too greateſt men of the age, has too extenſively circulated their miſunderſtandings; and if the reflection is painful to the friends of literature, to recollect that Voltaire and Rouſſeau were at variance, it is a duty incumbent on the friends of truth to inveſtigate and declare what were their reciprocal hoſtilities, and particularly from what quarter theſe hoſtilities originated. This inveſtigation I have made, and I have made it with the utmoſt attention—with the moſt accurate impartiality. I have diſcovered in Rouſſeau, the moſt profound veneration for Voltaire, even from his very youth. I have ſeen him, at the commencement of his literary career, eager to pay him homage, calling him his maſter, and commending him with warmth and addreſs: I have, on the other ſide, remarked in Voltaire's reply, a formal, an ironical ſtyle, which does not augur favourably of the termination of the correſpondence. As ſoon as Rouſſeau feels himſelf ſtrong enough to diſſent from Voltaire upon ſome important points of moral philoſophy, he does it with the moſt reſpectful politeneſs—with a mixture of ſincere and delicate praiſe. A ſmall note, which does not contain a ſyllable on the queſtion, is all the

anſwer he receives. His reputation increaſes, and with it Voltaire's diſtance. Reports dictated by falſe zeal, or perhaps more culpable motives, begin to irritate theſe two ardent and inflammable minds. They reciprocally conſider each other, and eſtimate their ſeveral forces; the one buoys himſelf up by conſideration of his wealth and literary ſupremacy, the other rears himſelf on the baſe of his independance and his virtue. In an explanation which Rouſſeau believed he owed Voltaire, he frankly confeſſes that he did not love him, and he aſſigns his reaſons; but he ſoftens this by commendations ſo very flattering, that this very circumſtance does but enhance their value. It is upon this ſingular declaration of hate that Voltaire's memory is ſo very treacherous in the concluſion, when he pretends to aſſert that it was in anſwer to his offer of an aſylum, and his teſtimonies of friendſhip. (See Note B.)

The misfortunes of Rouſſeau commence—the known ſentiments of Voltaire reſpecting him—his equally public connections with the enemies of Rouſſeau at Paris, Geneva, in England—all he ſays—all he writes—all that he is reported to have ſaid againſt the miſerable and fugitive author of Emilius, exhibit Voltaire as his violent and irreconcileable enemy. About this period, there appears to have been ſome reciprocity in their enmities; but this is only appearance, and even that ſoon vaniſhes.——Be pleaſed, Madam, to purſue the

whole thread of their proceedings in the Letters and Confeſſions of Rouſſeau, and in the works of Voltaire. Notwithſtanding your predilection for Jean Jacques, you will be grieved at finding him ſo abſurd; you will be ſorry to find nothing, even in the *Letters from the Mountain*, (See Note C.) that can counterpoiſe your indignation at that odious and reprehenſible, and indecent poem, intitled, *The Wars of Geneva*; and ſince I muſt ſpeak plain, that execrable libel which appeared under the title of *Sentiments of Citizens*, which even thoſe citizens who were moſt violent againſt Rouſſeau, were eager to diſclaim with horror. (See Note D.)

From that time Voltaire would hear nothing in favour of Jean Jacques—His works—his correſpondence—his proſe, and his verſes, characteriſe him as a fool—a pedant—a quidam—a pitiful beggar, &c. Voltaire muſt be pitied—we ſhould make ſome allowance for theſe weakneſſes, this irritability of genius; and it muſt not be forgotten, that this very intemperate warmth—the ſame effervescence of blood favoured and ſupported him during the long period of forty years, againſt that fanaticiſm which he has at length vanquiſhed; and rendered him the indefatigable defender of Calas, of Sirven, and of all thoſe who had groaned under oppreſſion; and that if his vengeance was inſatiable, ſo alſo was his beneficence and humanity.

Were I to be equally minute with all Rouſſeau's detractors—with all his enemies of more or leſs celebrity, I ſhould execute a taſk, eaſy in theſe days, when all is developed, but as little in uniſon with your patience as with my leiſure and inclination.

For, it cannot now be aſſerted, as formerly, that all his misfortunes exiſted in his imagination;—that his miſeries—his poverty—his maladies—his enemies—all was imaginary.

Without here repeating the name of a perſon yet living, and only known by his accuſation of Rouſſeau, a perſon whom I glanced at in my firſt letter, from whom, till this moment, we have vainly expected a reply—— Was not the hiſtorian, the philoſopher Hume, who, though at firſt he appeared too haſtily ſuſpected, yet in a moment, when ſuſpicion was very pardonable to a mind which unexpected perſecutions had thrown off its poiſe; who, far from endeavouring to diſſipate the cloud, ſeemed to delight in increaſing it; and who gave ample ground for ſuſpicion, from his intimate connections with the authors of a ſlanderous letter which diſgraced the prints of a free and hoſpitable nation, and by his ſilence reſpecting other public outrages committed againſt the reputation of the perſon of whom he ſtiled himſelf the friend and patron; and who, finally, as impartial minds have long decided, charges himſelf with all the culpability of this affair, by firſt making it public, and raiſing all Europe againſt an unfortunate man,

man, whoſe circumſtances and ſituation claimed his friendſhip and compaſſion * ?—Was not the philoſopher D'Alembert alſo his enemy, who conſtantly diſſembled his hatred during the life of Jean Jacques, but who evinced it in all its exceſs and virulence, by falſe accuſations of ingratitude to my Lord Marechal—accuſations equally unprovoked and abuſive, (See Note E.) exhibited publicly againſt Rouſſeau, in that ſame academy where he will be publicly refuted, if the orator who received the prize dares only be the hiſtorian of him whoſe eulogy was there expoſed † ?

Was not the philoſopher Diderot alſo his enemy, whom we have ſeen diſcovering his animoſity by the moſt outrageous injuries againſt the man who loved him tenderly—who conſoled him under his confinement—this very man who, in theſe terrible Confeſſions, the ſource of ſo many apprehenſions, and the pretext for ſo many enmities, never taxed him but with lightneſs and indiſcretion, and being hurried away with ſtrange impreſſions; and who believing he had reaſon to be diſſatisfied with his conduct, wrote him letters, to which no man could ſhut his heart, if his heart was not more ferocious than that of a tiger? (See Note F.)

* Read impartially every thing relative to this quarel, in the 4th Volume of the Supplement to Rouſſeau's Works.

† The prize has been ſince ſuſpended. I believe it: it will remain ſo a long time, where the panegyriſt will ſacrifice juſtice and truth to local conſiderations.

I know

I know how much our age is indebted to the two firſt editors of the Encyclopedia. I reſpect their fortitude—their knowledge, and their literary talents: I diſcuſs not the motives of this hatred againſt Rouſſeau; but, I ſay, that their breaking out immediately after his death, proves, at once, the violence of this hatred, and the difficulty of reſtraining it—and gives room to imagine, that it was for a long time in ſecret equally active as implacable.

Was not alſo the good and honeſt M de Holbach, if not a ſpiteful and vindictive enemy, at leaſt a friend of a very ſingular deſcription? But it is not from the Confeſſions that I form my judgment of him; it is from a letter written in his defence by an author whoſe perſon and talents I equally eſteem *. There I find preciſely the proof of every thing with which Rouſſeau reproaches him. (See Note G.) I can endure much in friendſhip; but if a man pretending to be my friend, and who poſſeſſes a fortune ſuperior to mine, ſhould take the liberty of jeering me; if he ſhould not find it agreeable that I ſhould be familiar and calm whenever he pleaſes that I ſhould be ſo; if he ſhould inceſſantly thwart me to make me *ſublime*, on ſuppoſition that it is in my power to become ſo, juſt in the ſame manner that they whip an ape to make him run round a circle; if he preſumes to ſuppoſe

* M. Cerutti's Supplement to the Paris Journal of December 1789.

that

that I have ſtoln the muſic I compoſe—if, wiſhing to aſcertain the truth, he holds out ſnares which he believes he can excuſe by calling them teſts—if I place my happineſs in the attachment of a ſimple, mild, and amiable girl; that is to ſay, who appears ſo to me, but who would, in the eyes of the world, be nothing, as not appearing a lady of the ton, and having no huſband to diſgrace or deceive; if, after ſome friendly remonſtrance on my part, my pretended friend returns abſolutely to the charge—if he torments me eternally, by conſpiring againſt my *Thereſa*, with another perſon who alſo calls himſelf my friend, and whom I could have well pardoned, his *Nanette*: ———I could not, I perceive, ſupport a conduct ſo oppoſite to friendſhip; I ſhould believe myſelf to have a right of ſuſpecting, in my turn, the man who could uniformly teſtify ſuch injurious ſuſpicions of me; if his wealth rendered him the center of a ſociety avowedly inimical to me, I ſhould not conſider myſelf unjuſt in regarding him, at leaſt, as an accomplice of all that perplexed and entangled me.

I knew M. de Holbach, and I heartily applaud every thing which his friends publiſh honourable to his memory; but with his good and mild character, it cannot be denied, that he had ſome propenſity to jeering *; there was ſomething deceitful in his ſmile, and he had

* This is what the ſame letter from M. Cerutti alſo proves.

too

too much of a bantering diſpoſition. But, at leaſt, Madam, if all the world does not equally love and admire Rouſſeau—at leaſt, it is very uncommon to hear him called a beggar—a quack—a vile ſcoundrel—an infamous villain.

But I have made an obſervation, from which you are at liberty to draw what concluſion you think proper; it is, that I have ſcarce known any body in habits of intimacy with M. de Holbach, who, in ſpeaking of Jean Jacques, did not make one of thoſe injurious ſlanders as I have never heard from the mouth of any man who was not acquainted with this ſociety.

It is preciſely the ſame with all his other enemies, whom he is unjuſtly accuſed for thus characterizing; and though his ſuſpicions might, in ſome reſpects, have been carried too far, yet they frequently but too well juſtified in the event. The outrages which they have committed againſt him, and the general accord in which they were united to deſtroy him, are no longer concealed—are not ſuppoſitions—they are facts—and the indiſcreet exploſions which have immediately ſucceeded his death, have ſufficiently revealed every thing. Explain by what ſprings, except thoſe of miniſterial influence, Geneva roſe againſt Rouſſeau, and ſhut its gates againſt him; and how, hoping to ſhelter himſelf as a refugee in a land of boaſted freedom, which he had kiſſed with tranſport upon his arrival, he was conſtrained to leave it, and even driven from that rude and ſolitary iſland,

iſland, where, weary of perſecutions—of glory —and of men, he wiſhed to end his days.—— Let my opponents alſo, if they can, explain how a miniſter, with all the affairs of Europe on his hands, could, if not expreſsly engaged, urge them to have intermeddled in ſo active a manner with thoſe of Jean Jacques.

Remember alſo, that this unfortunate man took ſhelter at Berlin, with Lord Marechal, his patron, or rather his friend, when preſſing invitations obliged him to change his project, and his route, to prefer England, and commit himſelf to the protection of Mr. Hume—that the very ſame perſons who urged him to this meaſure, equally the friends of Horace Walpole and David Hume, wiſhed previouſly to confide him to this Walpole;—that he was ſcarce arrived in England with Hume, than this ſame Walpole, whoſe friendſhip had been ſo puffed off—whoſe offer he had been ſo much preſſed to accept—publiſhed, at London, a ſpurious letter from the King of Pruſſia to Rouſſeau, equally injurious to both; and though he avowed himſelf the author, yet the French fabrication was ſo very glaring as to render this avowal very much ſuſpected.

Pleaſe to recollect alſo, that D'Alembert, the intimate friend of David Hume, and who, if we can credit his own aſſertion, had been ſix months from his departure without hearing from him, became ſuddenly the firſt in his confidence, the very moment when Jean Jacques, made deſperate at the myſterious darkneſs

neſs with which he was environed, and the eager malignity of his enemies, wrote him that letter, which I by no means pretend to juſtify in all points, but which Mr. Hume rather choſe to publiſh than to anſwer. Call to mind alſo, that it was by means of D'Alembert, who was privy to this miſunderſtanding, that he was induced to render it public—that, inſtead of ſoothing—inſtead of employing with a philoſophic reaſon, and the force of philoſophy—inſtead of attempting, by explanations ſo urgently, ſo ardently demanded, to adminiſter conſolation to a ſick mind—to a heart which believed itſelf wounded—he provokes—he expedites this ſcandalous publication—he was in fine the compiler—the editor of that brief expoſition, which, by an effect very different from his wiſhes, ſuffices at leaſt for the relative juſtification of the perſon who is accuſed, and for the condemnation of the accuſer.

Theſe are facts, and not conjectures—facts known long before the Confeſſions—facts which explain all the facts with which every thing appears. Let it then no longer remain a queſtion, whether Rouſſeau had enemies; if thoſe who always pretended to compaſſionate, and even to love him, actually formed a conſpiracy againſt him; and their unfortunate victim was no otherwiſe culpable than by exaggerating their influence and power.

Perhaps you are on the point of believing, that I who have inveighed ſo much againſt prejudices, have ſuffered myſelf to be blinded by

by my own; that, too deeply impreſſed with the injuries ſuſtained by Jean Jacques, and his patience in ſuſtaining them, I do not conſider what injuries he has done himſelf, nor his faults, nor his vices; and that, at length, notwithſtanding my promiſes, I have not made an examination, but a panegyric. No, Madam, I diſſemble nothing which I conceive reprehenſible in his conduct. Alas! who could exiſt without blame in his ſituation, expoſed during many years of his youth, wandering, poor, deſpiſed, and miſerable? His Confeſſions have well arranged what might perhaps otherwiſe cauſe ſome perplexity.

It is from himſelf I learn, that notwithſtanding the little regard he had for money—notwithſtanding a diſintereſtedneſs almoſt unexampled—he had from his infancy a propenſity to ſteal, which he could never totally eradicate: it is from himſelf I learn, that the intrepid Apoſtle, and indefatigable champion of truth, was himſelf given to lying;—his gluttony, amidſt a temperate life—his laſciviouſneſs, amidſt purity of manners; it is he himſelf who has acquainted me with all theſe faults. But without confining ourſelves to thoſe generalities which oppoſe and counterpoiſe each other, can you believe that I have forgot the innocent Maria, falſely accuſed of theft, though perhaps ſhe has been amply avenged by ſuch conſequent remorſe, and by ſuch ſubſequent misfortunes. Do you believe particularly, that I have forgot the honeſt Le Maitre, for-

ſaken

ſaken at Lyons, in the middle of a ſtreet, during an attack of the epilepſy, and left amongſt ſtrange people, by the only friend on whom he ought to have depended? No, doubtleſs—no more than I have forgot ſome other faults of leſs importance—ſome vicious cuſtoms, whoſe origin I can trace in his youth abandoned to poverty and neglect.

But I entreat you to obſerve, that all theſe traits are prior to what he calls his great reform. Notwithſtanding the firſt fruits of his retreat at Charmettes, he had not yet attained all that perfection with which that effervescence of genius and virtue inſpired him by the queſtion on the ſciences. It is from this point that we ought to commence the firſt exiſtence of the Author of Emilius; and as his underſtanding, and his ſoul, experienced the ſame viciſſitudes, and had the ſame means of increaſe, —when we deſire to be juſt, we ought no more to reproach him with what he was before in his morals, than with his deficiency in the talent of writing.

I know that his accuſations do not reſt here; and, in fact, nothing is more eaſy than to multiply accuſations, when proofs are diſpenſed with. One of the principal of theſe accuſations is that of ingratitude. Rouſſeau, ſay they, had naturally, and, by his own confeſſion, an ungrateful heart. You remember ſome time ago a paſſage in one of his letters, for which he has been ſo much abuſed—*This is the reaſon,* (he writes to M. de Malſherbes, ſpeaking

ing to him of his natural indolence, and averſion to all reſtraint, and inconvenient ceremonies)—*This is the reaſon why I have always ſo much feared kindneſs, for every benefit exacts gratitude; and I find my heart ungrateful only in this, that I conceive acknowledgment is a duty.*— It is impoſſible to be deceived, unleſs upon the ſenſe of this paſſage; but as there is nothing more candid than to enquire of the Author the meaning of his own texts—Rouſſeau himſelf will inform us *, "It was not after I received "favors that I maintained ſuch doctrine; it "was, on the contrary, to ſtop their progreſs, "which is a very different thing.—He who "wiſhes to ſerve me in his own way, and not "in mine, aims at the oſtentatious title of Be-"nefactor: and I confeſs to you, that nothing "in the world touches me ſo little as offices "like theſe. Would you attach me by be-"nefits? let them be my own choice, and "not your's; and aſſure yourſelf, that you will "never find, in the courſe of your life, *an "heart more grateful than mine.*" Without entering into further particulars—without examining, as I eaſily could, in how many inſtances he felt and teſtified his gratitude, becauſe he had been obliged, according to his wiſh, to judge after the rule he has given his pretended benefactors, you will ſee to what all reproaches of ingratitude will amount.

* Second Supplement to the Works of Rouſſeau, vol. iv. Anſwer to queries put by M. Chauval.

I can

I can yet ſuggeſt to you another mode of determining this queſtion. Rouſſeau, though always poor, was, nevertheleſs, ſo naturally beneficent, that he never refuſed either conſolation or aſſiſtance to the miſerable who begged it *. This is a teſtimony in his favour, univerſally allowed by all who knew him. I can only ſpeak perſonally of Montmorency and Ermenonville; but in theſe two places, where I have interrogated many perſons reſpecting him, all have given me the ſame anſwer: and I mention, that it is impoſſible for a man to be at once beneficent and ungrateful.

He was, ſay they again, incapable of friendſhip—quarrelling for trifles with his beſt friends—a diſagreeable companion, formed perhaps to enlighten men by his writings, but not to ſhare their ſocial intercourſe. He was formed, I reply, for a ſimple and tranquil life—for converſation with men free and ingenuous, who ſet an higher value on the integrity of the heart, than the ſparkling endowments of the underſtanding. Whenever he found men of this deſcription, he has lived with them peaceably, and upon terms of equality. But in raiſing ſocieties, where the mind is continually at war—where people overwhelm with

* Beſides the alms, conſiderable, conſidering his ability, which he continually diſtributed within his ſphere, he charged his income, which was not more than 1400 livres *per ann.* with an annuity to an old aunt who had brought him up; and amidſt his greateſt diſtreſſes, he paid it regularly.

fulſome

fulſome flatteries, which they expect to be repaid with uſury—where a man of underſtanding is not permitted to be ſilent among ſo many ſpeaking fools; all theſe faſhionable circles indeed, and all theſe men who carry into ſocieties leſs numerous, and even in private company, that preſumption and conceit which they have there habitually acquired—theſe men may, indeed, find him a petulant and an unſocial being.

That was indeed a very extraordinary ſpecies of exaction, of which they accuſed him; for he exacted nothing from any perſon, provided they permitted him to be quiet, and exacted nothing from him. But thoſe who termed themſelves his friends, were like the Swiſs ſoldier, who made this reply to a young officer who begged his life, "Aſk any thing elſe," replied he, "but for that it is impoſſible;" and inſtantly cut off his head. Let all thoſe with whom he differed, interrogate themſelves honeſtly, and they will know how to apply the moral of my ſtory of the Swiſs ſoldier. Rouſſeau wiſhes to be ſilent; they force him to ſpeak—he applies himſelf to botany; they talk to him of philoſophy—muſic occupies his attention; they din him with education, religion, politics—he deteſts praiſe; they impudently load him with it—he endeavoured to forget that he had ever wrote; they perſiſted in examining him, not as a man, but as an author—they unfeelingly wreſted from him—his time—his leiſure—his ſilence—his conſoling reveries: every

every one, in a word, was desirous that he should live after his peculiar manner, and were only unanimous in not permitting him to live after his own.

With respect to friendship, so far from being incapable of feeling it, might not we say, on the other side, that he was formed expressly for it? Was it not genuine friendship which attached him in his infancy to his cousin Bernard, which made them inseparable, and which induced him to expose himself so undauntedly to the blows he received in defending him? What was his attachment to the worthy M. Gaime, and the Abbé Gâtiêr? What was this attachment, but a tender and complying friendship? Did he not also tenderly love Claude Anet, although he had reasons sufficient to look upon him with an eye of jealousy? Had he not, from his youth, cultivated friendships which he always regarded as sacred *? Did he not—at Lyons—at Paris—and in the Venetian embassy, contract friendships which continued during his life? Let us, if you please, Duclos excepted, set aside all these friends whom he thought were attached to him, previous to his misfortunes, amongst our men of letters; but, after he had quitted France, and during his residence in Switzerland, did he not entertain a friendship the most sacred and tender, blended with gratitude and respect, for Lord Marechal,

* For M. de Cowzie, and even for Gauffecourt, though in a journey from Geneva, he had reason to be dissatisfied with his conduct.

from

from which he never ſwerved, even when his enemies had alienated, if not the heart, at leaſt the partiality of this venerable, but too weak, and too credulous friend? And by what ties was he united to Meſſrs. Moultou and du Peyrou, but thoſe of a firm and reciprocal friendſhip—Alas! how worthily have theſe two illuſtrious men, dignified by this very friendſhip, received that reward which their conſtancy ſo emphatically merited.—How may they felicitate themſelves in ſeeing the accompliſhment of the prophecy which Rouſſeau made to the former.—"When you ſee the truth," he writes to M. Moultou *, "it will not be then time "to declare it. We muſt wait for REVO-"LUTIONS, which will be favourable to its "expanſion, AND WHICH WILL HAP-"PEN SOON OR LATE;—at that period, "THE NAME OF MY FRIEND, which "muſt now be concealed, WILL BE AN "HONOUR TO THOSE WHO HAVE BORNE "IT, and who will fulfil theſe duties it en-"joins.—That, Moultou, is thy taſk.—It is "great—it is fair—it is worthy of thee—and "for ſome years my heart has choſen thee to "fulfil it." (See Note H at the end of this Letter.) Not to ſpeak of the juſtice of this prediction, is it not, Madam, the moſt noble, the moſt honourable language that confidence and friendſhip ever could adopt? Would you now ſee what is yet more frank—what is

* Second Supplement, IVth Volume.

ſtill more amiable, read this paſſage of a letter to Madame de Epinay—a paſſage ſo much more valuable, as it contains the doctrine of Jean Jacques, relative to friendſhip, and proves how little the not preſerving his friends could be imputed to him as a fault.

"Firſt, I wiſh that my friends ſhould be my friends, and not my maſters—that they ſhould adviſe, and not govern—I will willingly give them up my heart, but not my liberty.—Their eagerneſs to render me a thouſand ſervices that I have no occaſion for, are troubleſome to me. I find a certain air of ſuperiority which diſpleaſes me—beſides, all the world can do the ſame thing—I chooſe rather that they ſhould love me, and let me love them—that is what friends alone know how to do. If a miſunderſtanding ſhould take place, I ſhould expect that he who was the firſt aggreſſor ſhould be the firſt to make conceſſion—right or wrong, it is his part who began the quarrel to conclude it. —If I ſhould receive his cenſure ill—if I am out of temper without cauſe—and if I put myſelf in a paſſion at an improper time, he ſhould not behave in the ſame manner; I wiſh that he ſhould careſs me—Do you comprehend me, Madam?—that he ſhould ſoothe me—in ſhort, that he ſhould begin by appeaſing me, which will ſoon be effected—for there is no fire in my heart that a tear will not quench. Then, when I am ſoftened, calmed, aſhamed, confuſed, let him careſs me heartily—let him remonſtrate fairly, and he will ſurely be ſatisfied."

Is

Is a woman, who had once received a ſimilar declaration, excuſable for having ever quarrelled with a friend whom it was ſo eaſy to reconcile? Is ſhe excuſable for having ſo heavily taxed him with ingratitude, becauſe he did not think proper to follow her when his own health would not admit of the journey? Is ſhe excuſable, in fine, for having ordered to be engraved, under his buſt, an inſcription equally abſurd as injurious, in the garden of this little *hermitage*, with which ſhe was too fortunate in being able to accommodate him, and from whence her indelicate proceedings conſtrained him to depart in the midſt of the rudeſt winter.—Ought the buſt of Rouſſeau, which dignifies this ruſtic retreat, to have no other inſcription than injurious calumny, and what can be a more culpable profanation, than to erect marble ſtatues in honour of genius, and afterwards defame them in a manner more inſolent, and more durable. (See Note I.)

But he was pettiſh, irritable, ſuſpicious; and if in the general commerce of life irritability is a fault which renders us unſociable—in friendſhip, the very ſuſpicion of it is a crime.—Theſe are vague and general expreſſions with which whole pages are inflated, and which mean nothing. If Jean Jacques was naturally irritable, it was his misfortune, but not his fault. And how is it poſſible to poſſeſs the moſt delicate ſuſceptibility; how can the imagination, active and ardent, be animated

with enthuſiaſtic fire, and delicate in the extreme, without being more tremblingly alive to all external impreſſions? Men cold and prudent, judging great men from themſelves, preſume to weigh them in their own balance, and to meaſure them by their own ſtandard.

They would have, in ſucceſſive gradations, from their own poverty of intellect, to a degree of ſuperior underſtanding—from thence to a ſuperior endowment of wit—and from that to genius, greater itſelf than the aggregate of all other mental endowments; that neither the affections, the paſſions, nor the follies, ſhould admit either gradation or ſhade. But Nature has decided otherwiſe. She has wiſely, perhaps, ordained, by way of counterpoiſe, that the ſame delicacy of organs, the ſame ſenſibility of the heart, and the ſame ſuperiority of underſtanding, which produce excellence, produces alſo thoſe foibles in which little minds generally triumph. Sometimes ſhe has made the poſſeſſor pay much dearer for the partial endowment of genius—She kindled the flame of implacable reſentment in the ardent ſoul of the defender of Calas—ſhe ſoothed the heart of the author of Iphigenia and Phædra, when the frowns of a king, whom he had the ſimplicity to love, gave him the ſtroke of death; laſtly, it was ſhe that hollowed out, in the melancholic imagination of Paſcal, a gulf, where he believed himſelf continually in danger of being ſwallowed up.——Very well, then, ſuſpicion was the gulf which ſhe hollowed

ed in that of the Author of Emilius—but ſhe kept it cloſe covered, and as in reſerve till the moment which ſhe had fixed for the burſting forth of his genius. This very Jean Jacques, ſo very ſuſpicious in his laſt twenty years, was, during two-thirds of his life, the moſt unſuſpicious—the moſt credulous of all men; rather then let us ſay, that Nature indeed implanted in him the germs of ſuſpicion and miſtruſt; but that it was men who were falſe and treacherous, perfidious friends, and ſecret perſecutors, whoſe active and dark machinations, which only ſhewed themſelves by their effects, without his being ever able to ſee either the hand or the cauſe which brought it to maturity—that it was this ſubterranean league, with which he felt himſelf entangled, which gradually hollowed out that abyſs in his imagination, which, once opened, cloſed no more.

Examine the progreſſive degrees—the different and ſtated growth of this unfortunate propenſity to ſuſpicion, which at length, arrived at its acmè, became a ſad and afflicting folly—but you will reflect, Madam, that every other man, without poſſeſſing his genius, but endowed with the ſame feelings, under ſimilar circumſtances, would probably have acted preciſely in the ſame manner. In the reaſons of his departure from the Hermitage, thoſe of the two decrees, almoſt ſimultaneous at Paris and Geneva, and his flight after the

publication of Emilius — in that of his being ſtoned at Motiers—from his expulſion from the iſle of St. Peter's—from his miſunderſtanding with Mr. Hume, whom he had been ſo urgently preſſed to confide in, and for whom ſhe had been induced to prefer England to Pruſſia, and whom he inſtantly diſcovered to be the friend of all his enemies; to that of all the little perſecutions which tormented him in Dauphiné, and at Lyons, again repeated after his return to Paris—diminiſh as much as you please the extent of his conjectures, and there will ſtill remain ſufficient to afflict and derange a ſuperior underſtanding.

Alas! he ſometimes, himſelf, experienced this afflicting change. Scarce eſcaped from the ſevere trials which he had juſt undergone in England — "I begin to fear," writes he to M. de Turnois, "after ſo many real misfor-"tunes which have aſſailed me, there may be "ſome imaginary ones which exiſt only in my "brain. Of this, however, I am very cer-"tain, that whatever alteration my head may "experience, my heart will ever remain the "ſame." This fatal malady rapidly augmented, ſince, inſtead of ſoothing and attempting to reprove it, his enemies amuſed themſelves in furniſhing it inceſſantly with freſh and congenial aliments; ſo that in his laſt years we might apply with peculiar propriety to the unfortunate Jean Jacques, that expreſſion of Arioſto, "from the ſuſpicious perſon he was

at

at firſt, he actually became ſuſpicion itſelf *."

How much ſhould it excite our compaſſion, that this heart, ſo affectionate—this mind ſo exquiſitely feeling, ſhould abſolutely diſtruſt all mankind—whilſt, ſome enemies around him forced to conceal their hatred only excepted, all hearts were open to receive him—how much is it to be regretted that he conſidered combined againſt him in one general conſpiracy, a nation which even then began to do juſtice to his merit, and which was upon the point of almoſt idoliſing his talents, and becoming the vindicator of his fame! How much ought he to be pitied, that when even alone, and ſeparated from the world—blaſted by a long ſeries of injury and misfortune, and not daring to unboſom himſelf to any one, he ſhould have cultivated, in this ſtate of ſolitude, that habitual and gloomy diſtruſt which terminated in deranging his underſtanding!—But how much more ought he to be pitied, if he ſhould have found in an unworthy companion—in her who was neareſt to his heart, the indefatigable inſtigator of all his apprehenſions—his anguiſh, and his continual terrors!

A thouſand voices exclaim at once againſt her:—muſt we give them credit—can we ſuppoſe that ſuch a woman had ſo long breathed the ſame air with Jean Jacques—poſſeſſed his

* Di ſoſpettuto ch'era ſtato in prima,
Ho divenuto era il ſoſpetto ſteſo.

† This was written in July 1790.

confidence, and appeared to merit it by ſharing his misfortunes!—Why did ſhe follow him in his exile?—Why attach herſelf to him in his miſery—in his infirmities—in his affliction?—Could ſo much rancour and meanneſs be blended with ſuch diſintereſted and generous conſtancy?—How could ſhe whoſe rectitude, ſimplicity, and goodneſs of heart, he ſo highly applauds in his Letters and Confeſſions—ſhe, whom he terms the ſole conſolation of his life—could ſuch a woman have been its torment and diſgrace?—No.—Never can I believe theſe vague and uncertain reports; ſcarce would I even admit the proofs.—To blacken with fears and ſuſpicions a free and unſuſpecting ſoul—to ſever it from all the univerſe, and to exhibit only as his enemies a people who were his admirers, would now be an horrible crime. But ſhe is accuſed of one yet more horrible!——Judge how reluctantly I can ſuſpect of this—a woman and a mother!—Will her crime diminiſh here the moſt flagrant crime of which Rouſſeau has accuſed himſelf? yet, notwithſtanding, I cannot induce myſelf to believe that ſhe was guilty. (See Note K.)

Amongſt thoſe diſcloſures which I ought to make, and thoſe which equity obliges me to notice in Jean Jacques, this is one which I have juſt touched upon—one which I have hitherto reluctantly protracted to remark. But now at the point of concluding, I find myſelf, through miſmanagement, obliged to terminate

nate theſe Letters with what I conceive moſt unfavourable to their object; and to leave, for the laſt trait in your mind, the remembrance of a fault which every man of ſenſibility will find difficult to pardon; and the only one, perhaps, which women can never forgive.—— Though I have not the happineſs of being a father, far be it from me, Madam, to attempt any apology for a father who has abandoned his children; and leaſt of all to you, ſo good and tender a mother, ſhould I preſume to addreſs ſuch apology.

Nevertheleſs, even in blaming a culpable action, we ſhould ceaſe to be juſt if we were to be immoderate; and, when not inſpired by any particular animoſity, we ought not, like Hatred, to be deaf to thoſe reaſonable allegations which may tend to extenuate a fault or even a crime.—Rouſſeau had five children, all of whom, it is but too true, were placed at the Foundling Hoſpital, but not all in the ſame manner. The two firſt were there depoſited, almoſt without reflection, by a train of pernicious maxims which he every day heard upon this ſubject, by perſons deſtitute both of principle and virtue, but not without underſtanding and politeneſs. In following their example, he believed he was acting like every body elſe under ſimilar circumſtances; more eſpecially as, notwithſtanding their miſconduct, they were looked up to, in thoſe times, as perſons of conſequence and diſtinction. What

was he then himſelf? Secretary, at nine hundred livres *per ann.* to a female *belle eſprit*—who, very far from having any idea of the man ſhe employed, found him only capable of writing what ſhe dictated, and making for her uſe ſome learned inveſtigation; while he, on the other ſide, very far from anticipating himſelf what he might one day prove—had ſcarcely ſufficient to ſupport himſelf, his wife, and mother, and the growing family. In this predicament, then, we muſt conſider him, to judge truly of his fault, which I by no means excuſe.—I only exhibit him ſuch as he is—but you ſee how much people are miſtaken, and how they confuſe the dates, when they aſſert, that the Author of Eloiſa and Emilius put his children to the Foundling.

His three other children, born after his reformation, and in a time when the elevation of his morals no longer ſuffered him to be guilty of ſuch indifference, ſhared nevertheleſs the ſame fate—but then his error was well deliberated.—I ſhall not here recapitulate the motives, but they certainly ought to be read previous to our deciſion. We ſhould alſo read what he himſelf remarks of them, about the beginning of his eighth, and towards the middle of the ninth book, in ſpeaking of the family of Le Vaſſeur;—alſo in his reveries;—and particularly, in a letter from Madame de Chenaiceaux *.

* Vol. V. of the new collection, publiſhed by M. du Peyrou.

If,

If, notwithſtanding all theſe reaſons, he ſhould yet be found reprehenſible, I ſhall not undertake to defend him; but I will remark, that if, in reading his Emilius, we are induced, in the ſmalleſt degree, to excuſe his crime, it was alſo in compoſing it that his remorſe, at its commiſſion, attacked him in the moſt pungent manner.—To corroborate this aſſertion, I ſhall cite the following paſſage from the twelfth book of the Confeſſions: "The meaſure I "reſolved upon with reſpect to my children, "however well ſupported it then appeared to "me, did not leave my mind at eaſe. In "meditating upon my Treatiſe on Education, "I felt that I had neglected indiſpenſable "duties—my remorſe became at length ſo "violent, that it almoſt wreſted from me a "public confeſſion of my fault at the begin-"ning of Emilius; and even this trait appears "ſo very clear, that after ſuch a paſſage, it is "ſurpriſing they had the boldneſs to reproach "me with it."

This is not the only place where he teſtifies his repentance: But he ſays, in a letter, written ten years after Emilius; "I who "ſpeak of family and children—compaſſionate "thoſe, Madam, whom Fate has deprived "of ſimilar happineſs—compaſſionate them "if they are only miſerable—pity them yet "more if they are criminal. For me, never "will I ſhelter myſelf by prevarication, nor "warp, by my errors my maxims, to my con-"duct.——Never will I be ſtigmatized for

" perverting the ſacred laws of nature and of
" duty, to extenuate my faults—much rather
" would I expiate than excuſe them. When
" my reaſon tells me, that I have done my
" duty in my ſituation, I give more credit to
" my heart, which groans and contradicts it."

In reading this, Madam, ought not every juſt, every humane mind—I will not abſolutely ſay, pardon the crime, but, at leaſt, pity while it condemns the criminal.—Shall Jean Jacques be the only perſon for whom we ſhall forget the truth of this fine verſe——

God all our virtues in a moment forms?

For me, were I to paint Rouſſeau, cited to anſwer for this fault before the tribunal of Nature, I ſhould repreſent her veiling herſelf in grief at the infraction of her moſt ſacred laws; but on the other ſide, the delinquent bathed in repentant tears, and pointing to myriads of the human race, recalled back by his eloquence to the cultivation of nature, and to a love for thoſe very laws which he had the misfortune to forget;—thus would the ſoftened goddeſs ſweetly raiſe her veil, and permit ſome rays of mercy to gliſten in her countenance.

NOTES.

(A. ſee p. 79.)

HIS ardour for the ſtudy of plants often led him to the King's garden; Meſſrs. Thouin and de Juſſieu were, for ſome time, the only perſons in the ſecret—but as ſoon as this reached the public—they appeared—they ſurrounded, and followed him, like a ſtrange animal in a fair. Thus incommoded, he returned no more, and was thus deprived of his greateſt ſource of amuſement. The boobies who had thus driven him away, found, to be ſure, that he was very ſavage, and extremely ill-bred, thus to ſnatch himſelf from their indolent and ſtupid gaze. M. de Juſſieu, as we may well ſuppoſe, found great pleaſure in conducting him to his herboriſations in the country; where, notwithſtanding his age, Rouſſeau was as active—as gay—as boyiſh as the young pupils. One day, after gathering herbs upon the heights of Meudon, the whole party

party returned by the Galiot, from St. Cloud. As ſoon as every one was ſeated, a little inſignificant Prieſt roſe up, and, addreſſing himſelf to Jean Jacques, interrogated him upon his principles and his doctrine; and without waiting his anſwer, in which he would, in fact, have been diſappointed, began to chatter with great effrontery, upon dogmas, morality, and faith, and the miracles, *ab hoc*, *ab hac*, like a true Sorboniſt, without underſtanding, however, a ſingle word he ſaid. They wiſhed in vain to make him hold his peace. Rouſſeau, with his eyes caſt down, and in the moſt mournful ſilence, waited patiently the arrival of the Galiot—he landed amongſt the firſt, and ſaid nothing—but he returned no more to the country herboriſation.

Of all the men of letters with whom he aſſociated after his return to France, the perſon who beſt knew his worth, and whoſe ideas were moſt congenial with his own, was the juſtly celebrated Author of the ſtudies of Nature. They, therefore, remained united to the laſt. The taſte for botany—for country walks—for all things natural and ſimple—equal innocence of manners—equal love for humanity—every thing concurred to maintain between them an union which nothing but death could diſſolve. In the preface to his *Arcadia*, a work which all the friends of Nature wiſh to ſee finiſhed; M. de St. Pierre does more juſtice than any other author of equal celebrity, to the goodneſs—the probity—

the

the ſociality, of Jean Jacques. He cites there the moſt affecting proofs of their walks and their diſcourſes; recals to mind thoſe times, ſo far removed from the preſent day, when wiſe men, not ſeeking merely their own inſtruction, drew forth, by communication of their ſentiments and informations, new means to enlighten other men.

When Jean Jacques returned, after a long abſence, to the Wood of Boulogne, where he often went with his wife to eat a cutlet, the Waiter accoſts him with "Well, good man, where do you ſtart from? 'Tis a monſtrous long time ſince we have ſeen you?" to which he ſimply replied, "My wife has been a long time ſick, and I have been myſelf very much fatigued."—Jean Jacques ſaw nothing extraordinary in having been taken ſo long, by this Waiter, for a man in the condition of a mechanic, and even appeared not to comprehend the aſtoniſhment which ſuch a mode of accoſting produced in his companion; for, according to M. de St. Pierre, "he had not the "vanity which moſt men of learning uſually "poſſeſs; who wiſh always to occupy other "people with their ideas, and ſtill leſs that of "people of the world, who believe that a "man of letters is formed to draw them from "their ennui by his prattle. This Jean Jac-"ques, who ſhared the amuſements and the "labors of converſation, ſpeaking in his turn, "and ſuffering others to ſpeak—leaving them

" even the choice of diſcourſe, and lowering " himſelf to their ſtandard—was too modeſt " to adopt the theatrical tone, and oracular " ſentences of our converſation—he lived in " the centre of our *beaux eſprits*, with the " ſame ſimplicity as a girl with her natural " complexion amongſt women who had " plaiſtered themſelves with white and " red.——This Jean Jacques, ſo well adapt- " ed to eſtimate his genius and probity, " yet found his probity ſuperior to his genius, " who was, according to his own opinions, " of the uſual number of men of letters, " proved by misfortunes, to whom we might, " without riſk, enumerate our moſt ſecret " thoughts, and from whom we ſhould appre- " hend neither ill-nature if he found them " improper, nor infidelity if they appeared " juſt." And is this the man whoſe pride and inſociability is ſo much inveighed againſt? Is this the man of whom we have ſeen ſuch hideous portraits? Ah! doubtleſs, the model is the ſame—there is no other difference than the eye of the painter, and the fidelity of the pencil.

(B. ſee p. 82.)

Voltaire wrote, in 1766, to David Hume, about the time of their quarrel, " When I " knew that he had many enemies at Paris, " and that, like me, he loved retirement,

" and

" and that I ſuppoſed he could render ſome " ſervice to philoſophy, I propoſed to him, " through the medium of M. Mark Chappuis, " citizen of Geneva, about the year 1759, a " country houſe, called the Hermitage, " which I had juſt purchaſed." He replied to this offer expreſsly as follows:

" *Sir,*

" *I do not like you; you corrupt my republic,* " *by giving repreſentations in your ſeat at Ferney,* " *&c.*"

This is the firſt cauſe of complaint that Voltaire, in explaining the motives of his hate —his perſecution—his injuries, which this, however, would be inſufficient to juſtify, has always alledged. It is that too which thoſe among his friends yet alledge, who ſeem to think they cannot ſufficiently admire him without entering into a juſtification of all his animoſities. Yet M. de Condorcet himſelf, notwithſtanding his ſuperior underſtanding, ſays, in his life of Voltaire, " He was unjuſt, be- " cauſe Rouſſeau had irritated him, by an- " ſwering his offers of ſervice with re- " proaches." Let us now examine what all theſe offers amounted to, and what were theſe reproaches. But all this originates merely, as I have remarked, in a defect of memory; for no perſon chuſes to charge Voltaire with any other ſource of this miſtake.

In the firſt place, it is impoſſible that Jean Jacques could have reproached him with theſe repreſenta-

repreſentations at the ſeat at Ferney in 1759; ſince at this time Voltaire yet lived in the Delices. It was about the year 1755, that writing to Rouſſeau a letter, beginning in the following ironical ſtyle: "*I have received, Sir, your new book againſt the human race,*" (alluding to the diſcourſe upon the origin of inequality amongſt men) he concludes it, by telling him, "M. Chappuis informs me, that your "health is very indifferent; you muſt come and "re-eſtabliſh it in your native air—enjoy your "liberty, and drink with me the milk of our "cows, and *brouze our herbs.*" This invitation, made when Rouſſeau had but few open enemies, was, if you pleaſe, very polite; but this has no reſemblance to offers of ſervice, any more, than there was any appearance of injury in that charming anſwer—"I am "thankful for your invitation, and if this "winter leave me in a condition to go and "live in my native country in the ſpring, I "will then avail myſelf of your kind offer; "but I ſhould rather drink the water of your "fountain, than the milk of your cows; and "as to the herbs of your orchard, I fear I "ſhould find none there but the lotos, which "is not food for beaſts, and the moley; which "prevents men from becoming ſo. *"

The

* Rouſſeau was right then in ſaying, a long time after, in his anſwers to the interrogatories of M. Chauvel, "Never in 1759, nor at any other period, has M. Mark Chappuis propoſed to me from M. de Voltaire to inhabit a little

The year following, 1756, in the letter from Rouſſeau to Voltaire, upon his two poems on *The Natural Law*, and *The Diſaſters of Liſbon*, we find, ſtrong and demonſtrable argumentation in favour of the ſyſtem of Pope and Leibnitz, blended with politeneſs, reſpect, and teſtimonies of ſincere admiration, which merited an anſwer, particularly from a man who was addicted to flatter even the loweſt ſubaltern of literature. It is towards the concluſion of this long and excellent letter, that Rouſſeau propoſes to Voltaire the deſign of a Moral Code, or Profeſſion of Civil Faith, which he deſires him to clothe in all the charms of poetry: "This project," ſays he, "muſt "be pleaſing to the author of Alzira; you have "given us, in your poem on Natural Religion, "the Catechiſm of Man—now give us the Ca-"techiſm of a Citizen—It is an affair which "will require long meditation, and perhaps "ſhould be reſerved for the laſt of your "works: to terminate by a benefit to the "whole human race, the moſt brilliant career "that any man of letters ever ran." No

a little houſe called the Hermitage. In the year 1755, M. de Voltaire preſſed me to return to my own country, invited me to come and drink ſome of the milk of his cows. To which I replied, and both our letters were publiſhed. I do not remember to have received any other invitation from him" (Second Suppl. to the works of J. J. Rouſſeau, Vol. 4 N. 13.) M. Chappuis was then living, and has neither corroborated Voltaire's aſſertion, nor contradicted Rouſſeau's.

other

other anſwer was written to this, but a very ſhort and inſignificant note—the laſt he ever wrote him—No, I miſtake; Candidus appeared a ſhort time after, where all the arguments by which Jean Jacques had ſupported, in his Letter, the conſoling ſyſtem of Optimiſm, were traveſtied in the mouth of Dr. Pangloſs.

In the article *Geneva* in the Encyclopædia, d'Alembert, to flatter Voltaire, inſerts in 1758 a pleading in favour of the eſtabliſhment of a theatre in this little republic. One part of this article is abſolutely retouched and corrected by Voltaire himſelf: Rouſſeau, believing this advice to be pernicious to his country, publiſhes his Letters to d'Alembert upon Public Repreſentations, which neither d'Alembert nor Voltaire have ever forgiven *. It is well known, that this was always reſented by Voltaire; Rouſſeau was but too well apprized by his correſpondence at Geneva of his manner of ſpeaking of him, and the influence he

* Voltaire was offended at Rouſſeau's having addreſſed to him a copy of his letter; yet this meaſure was but free and ingenuous. "I am not ignorant," ſays Rouſſeau, in a letter to M. Verne, "that the article Geneva was partly "executed by M. de Voltaire—though I had the prudence "to hint nothing of this. You will eaſily ſee, upon reading "the work, that I knew what I ſhould adhere to in writ-"ing. But I ſhould think it very ſingular, if M. de Vol-"taire ſhould believe that account; that I ſhould fail to "render him a homage, which I offer him moſt heartily— "Curſed be all human reſpect offenſive to rectitude and "truth! From ſuch infamous thraldom I hope I ſhall ever "be exempt."

began

began to acquire, by his connections with the first members of the Council.

In 1760, the letter upon the poem of the Disaster of Lisbon being printed at Berlin, he believed it a duty to make some explanation respecting this to Voltaire. He adds, with a frankness offensive perhaps to cold unmeaning politeness, yet expressive of a mind beyond the common standard, "I do not love "you, Sir; you have injured me in the most "sensible manner. Me, your disciple and "your enthusiast—you have alineated from me "my fellow-citizens, to gain that applause "which I have lavished upon you amongst "them—I hate you, in a word, since you have "desired it——but yet I hate you, as a man "yet more worthy to esteem you, if you had "wished it. Of all the sentiments with "which my heart was penetrated for you, "nothing remains but that admiration which "I cannot refuse to your fine genius, and the "love of your writings—If I can only ad-"mire your talents, it is not my fault——I "shall never fail in that respect which I think "their due, nor from that conduct which this "respect demands." What is there then so outrageous in an hate so noble? Might we not say, that by a refined species of delicacy, Rousseau only declares his hatred, to give a greater value to his estimation and his eulogy; but no, there is rather in this elevated species of hatred and its declarations, an humiliating advantage, an unpardonable superiority.

(C. See p. 83.)

IT is in the 5th of theſe letters, that there is an attack very pointed, and as much more cutting for Voltaire; as Rouſſeau there employs againſt him, an exact imitation of his ſtyle and the turn of his periods. He has been charged with this as a great crime; and I will not ſay but he departed here from his uſual moderaion; but this attack was not, as has been aſſerted, unprovoked; it was brought on, and almoſt forced, by a train of circumſtances and events, from which, though appearing to be the aggreſſor, he was in fact but acting in ſelf-defence. This is as eſſential to declare, as it is eaſy to demonſtrate.

We muſt recur for this purpoſe to the time of the affair of Emilius, and put ourſelves in the place of its author. Nine days were ſcarcely paſſed, after the decree of the parliament of Paris, before a ſimilar decree was iſſued from Geneva. Why this very ſingular and extraordinary conformity? who has been able to induce the republic, almoſt without examination, without examining the motives, ſo ſuddenly to follow the example of France? Voltaire was connected with Rouſſeau's enemies, with the chiefs of the ariſtocratic party at Geneva, irritated and combined againſt him, with M. de Choiſeul, who hated him, and could do every thing at Geneva. Was it not perfectly

perfectly natural that he ſhould attribute to this aſſociation the unjuſt violence of the Council againſt his perſon and his work? Two years paſs away, and Rouſſeau remains exiled upon the mountain. Piqued at finding that his fellow-citizens did not exert in his favour that right of repreſentation which the conſtitution gave them, he breaks with them entirely, and abdicates the rights of freedom, and the city.

This abdication makes them ſenſible of their remiſſneſs: they then unite his cauſe with ſome other grievances they experienced, and make repreſentations to the Council, which are diſregarded. They inſiſt, purſuant to their rights; this reply contains a paragraph, from whence all the miſchief originates. There they mark out the works tolerated at Geneva, *publiſhed, and even printed in the town; works in which many arrows have been aimed againſt Providence, the immortality of the ſoul, the religion of the Jews; and where religion is abſolutely ridiculed.* But in comparing Rouſſeau's works with thoſe thus tolerated, it appears ſtrange to them, that the Council ſhould think it their duty to deal hardly with the former, while they permit the latter to paſs unmoleſted, and proteſt againſt a partiality at once ſo dangerous and ſo contrary to the conſtitution.

Here then Voltaire evidently ſteps forward, without the knowledge of Rouſſeau, at that time abſent from Geneva, and at variance with his

his ancient fellow-citizens. This paper war became embarraſſing to the Council: the Attorney General, Trenchin, undertakes its defence, and writes againſt the remonſtrants, the *Letter written from the Country*. Mark, with all his underſtanding, what a blundering anſwer he gave to the paſſage above cited: "The compariſon of Emilius and the Social "Contract with other; works which have "been tolerated, and that partiality for which "the Council is cenſured, appears to me ill "founded. It would be a very defective "mode of reaſoning to aſſert, that a govern-"ment, becauſe it ſhould once have judged "it expedient to diſſemble, ſhould be there-"fore obliged always to diſſemble. If it is "from negligence, it may be redreſſed; "*if it is a ſilence conſtrained either by circum-"ſtances or policy, there would be little juſtice in "making it a matter of reproach.* I do not "pretend to juſtify the works pointed out "in theſe repreſentations; but is there in "conſcience any parity between books, where "we find ſcattered indiſcreet ſtrokes againſt "religion, and books where, without circum-"locution, without diſguiſe, without addreſs, "it is attacked in its dogmas, its morality, "and its influence upon civil ſociety; let us "impartially compare theſe works, and let us "judge them by the impreſſion they have "made *in the world.* The former are printed

" and univerſally received. We well know " what has been the reception of the latter."

They could not have declared in plainer terms, that however certain works of Voltaire, publicly ſold and printed within our walls, may be deſerving of cenſure, yet as he is the friend of M. de Choiſeul, and this miniſter diſpoſes of us as he pleaſes, we are compelled to tolerate them; but that is no reaſon why we are compelled to tolerate the works of another author, who is not in the miniſter's favour. It was even leaving us to underſtand more than this, and ſaying implicitly, " The manifeſt " contradiction of this conduct, would have " induced us to ſay nothing upon *Emilius* and " the *Social Contract*, if we had not received dif- " ferent orders. It is M. de Choiſeul who leads " us, it is he that obliges us to receive this, and " to learn that; we have no power ourſelves, and " therefore ought not to be reproached." Had this been the caſe, would they have been ſo haſty in fulminating this decree? Would they not have given themſelves time to read, examine, and underſtand? In reporting only at the diſtance of nine days an arret iſſued in France, againſt one of their fellow-citizens, would they not fear being ſtigmatized as the mere echo of the parliament of Paris?

Let us then be juſt; was it in the leaſt extraordinary, that Rouſſeau, thus ſacrificed to political conſiderations, ſhould become miſ-

truſtful after his misfortunes? and, diſcerning ſo clearly the connection eſtabliſhed between the Council, M. de Choiſeul, and Voltaire, would he not have preſſed his inferences farther? How could he have patiently endured to hear ſuch motives aſſigned for the proſcription of his writings? How deeply muſt his feelings have been injured, at finding *Emilius*, and the *Social Contract* degraded beneath a few pamphlets, very humorous indeed, and therefore not to be compared with the logic which ſupports the former! How, in a word, in that thundering anſwer contained in his "Letters written from the Mountain," to the "Letters written from the Country," could it be expected he would ſuffer to paſs unnoticed that confeſſion of his adverſaries from which he could derive ſo much advantage? Would not this have been neglecting one of the great pillars of his cauſe? And from whom can we expect ſimilar forbearance? The reply, then, to this article, if it was not totally exempt from malice, was at leaſt exempt from rancour and violence, and conducted with that fineſſe which broke all the meaſures of Voltaire, and foiled him at his own weapons. Here he introduces Voltaire himſelf, adviſing toleration to the magiſtrates of Geneva. "Gentlemen (he makes him ſay), it is not "thoſe that reaſon who do miſchief; it is "bigots, reaſoning, of all human follies, "which leaſt injures the human race; and

"we

" we ſometimes ſee very wiſe men occaſionally
" tainted with that folly. It is true, I do not
" reaſon myſelf, but I do better; I make my
" readers reaſon. See my Chapter on the
" Jews; ſee it more at length, in the Sermon
" of the *Fifty*, &c."

He terminates this interview thus: " We
" have ſo arranged amongſt ourſelves, that my
" great credit at court, and my extenſive in-
" fluence, will be a ſufficient pretext for you
" to ſuffer to paſs unmoleſted the trifling *jeux*
" *d'eſprits* of my old age; this is all very
" well; but do not therefore burn more ſeri-
" ous writings: that would be too ſhocking:
" I have preached up toleration ſtrongly, and
" we muſt not always exact it from others,
" unleſs we allow it to them. Does this poor
" man believe in God; he will form no ſect.
" He is tireſome. All reaſoners are
" the ſame. We will not give him a
" place at our ſuppers: for the reſt, what
" does it ſignify to us? If all ſtupid books
" were burned, what would become of the
" libraries? and if we ſhould burn all ſtupid
" people, we ſhould make ſhambles of the
" country. Take my advice, ſuffer thoſe to
" reaſon, who permit us to jeſt, let us burn
" neither men nor books, and remain at
" peace; this is my judgment."

I once more acknowledge that this is a home thruſt, but it was provoked—it is executed neatly and dextrouſly: and if it wounds,

it neither mangles nor murders—we ſhall ſee by the following note, if we can ſay as much in favour of the report.

It is ridiculous to aſſert, like the laſt editor of Voltaire, that in a country where ancient intolerant and barbarous laws were not yet eſtabliſhed, ſuch an accuſation of Rouſſeau was truly criminal. This was not at firſt ſimply an accuſation, but an extorted recrimination. If any cauſe of accuſation exiſted, it ſhould have been levelled at the citizens who firſt clearly marked out Voltaire in their repreſentation to the Council; it ſhould have been directed againſt the injudicious anſwers of the author of the "Letters from the Country," where Voltaire was yet more expoſed. In fine, would this pretended charge have been ſo criminal, if it had not been dangerous to Voltaire, who had given ample reaſon for this attack. He had in his intereſt, and frequently at his own houſe, the chief of the Council; and *political reaſons*, in caſe of complaints, would always *have commanded ſilence*.

(D. See p. 83.)

THE following libel appeared a few days after the *Letter from the Mountain*. To juſtify the title I have given it, I ſhall only cite this paſſage:—"Is it a ſcholar who diſputes with a "ſcholar? No, it is the author of a puffed "opera and two comedies. Is it a man of "honour, who, through miſguided zeal, indiſ-

"creetly

" creetly cenſures virtuous characters? With " grief, with ſhame, we make the declara- " tion,—it is a man who yet bears about him " the fatal marks of his debaucheries, and " who, diſguiſed like a mountebank, drags " along with him from village to village the " miſerable female whoſe mother he has killed, " whoſe infants he expoſes at the gate of an " hoſpital—abjuring all the ſentiments of " nature, as he attempts to deſtroy all thoſe " of honour and religion."

We well know the anſwer which Rouſſeau made to theſe lines of blood and gall: but it is neceſſary to re-peruſe it, that we may again be reconciled to humanity:—" I will make, with " the utmoſt ſimplicity, that declaration which " this article ſeems to demand of me.—Never " did any ſuch malady as this author here ſpeaks " of, in the ſmalleſt degree deform my body. " That malady with which I am afflicted, has " not the ſmalleſt connection with it, and is " hereditary, as thoſe who have ſuperintended " my infancy can yet teſtify. That prudent and " univerſally eſteemed woman, who has nurſed " me in my ſickneſſes, and conſoled me in my " afflictions, is no otherwiſe wretched, than as " ſharing the fate of a man wretched in the " extreme. Her mother is yet ſtrong and in " good health, notwithſtanding her old age. " I have never expoſed, nor cauſed to be ex- " poſed, any child at the gate of an hoſpital, " or any where elſe.—I ſhall add nothing upon " this paſſage, but that, next to murder, I ſhould

" rather chuſe to have been guilty of what this " author accuſes me, than to have wrote a " ſimilar accuſation."

Reſpecting the poem of *The War of Geneva*, which did not appear till many years after, taſte for poetry at leaſt would have demanded ſome honourable expiations, although honour ſhould not exact it.

> The mad Rouſſeau, ſtupified with rage,
> This black demoniac crouches there.
> This enemy to the human race,
> Nearly reſembles a dog in diſpoſition.

Here are ſpecimens of elegance of ſtyle and juſtneſs of thought!

Rouſſeau, who never ſtooped in his literary controverſies from the dignity of genius, was not long before he alſo obtained his revenge. What follows is a dreadful proof.—He ſubſcribed in 1770 for the ſtatue of Voltaire *. The ſimplicity with which he did it, and the

* 'Tis worthy remark, that it was at this very period that Voltaire, who never loſt any opportunity of ſneering at Rouſſeau, wrote to Madame Necker:—

> For me, caitiff, a ſtatue!
> 'Tis to Jean Jacques this is due:
> But the univerſe is ungrateful.

Little did he think at the moment he was ſpeaking ſo true. —Far was he from foreſeeing, that twenty years after, if not the *univerſe*, at leaſt the whole nation, would unanimouſly clear itſelf from the charge of this *ingratitude*.

childiſh

childiſh chagrin which Voltaire in conſeqoence teſtified, added equally to his triumph.—"I "learn, Sir, (he writes to M. de la Tourette) "that it is in agitation to erect a ſtatue to "M. de Voltaire, and that all perſons, who "are known as authors, are permitted to unite "in this undertaking. I have paid dearly "enough for the privilege of being admitted "to that honour to excuſe me from preſump- "tion in making my claim; and I intreat you "to have the goodneſs to interpoſe your good "offices, to procure the inſertion of my name "amongſt the number of ſubſcribers. I hope, "Sir, that the favours with which you honour "me, and the occaſion on which I requeſt "their continuance, will induce you eaſily to "pardon the liberty I have taken. Lyons, "2d June, 1770."

As ſoon as Voltaire was apprized of this, he inſtantly wrote to M. de la Tourette:—"Pro- "bably you are acquainted, Sir, with a para- "graph in the Gazette of Berne, that Jean "Jacques Rouſſeau had wrote to you a letter, "depoſiting in your hands his ſubſcription for a "certain ſtatue. I beg you to inform me if "this is true. *I fear* that the men of letters in "Paris will not admit of a ſtranger. This is "a piece of politeneſs entirely French. Thoſe "who have propoſed it are all either artiſts or "amateurs. *The Duke de Choiſeul is at the head,* "and would perhaps be ſorry that this article "in the Gazette was founded."—I am ſorry for it too after the memory of M. de Choiſeul:—

but theſe few words contain an amazing elucidation.

N. B. Theſe three notes reſpecting Voltaire, are very long, and perhaps, for more reaſons than one, will be offenſive to many. I have only, however, reſtored facts long miſrepreſented by malevolence, and adopted by credulity. I implore theſe perſons to pardon me for having examined impartially, but attentively, what they have rather choſe to decide without examination. I intreat them to believe, that their admiration for Voltaire is perhaps leſs vivid, and leſs ſincere than mine; which is not biaſſed, either by any perſonal motives—by any prior connection—or by any ſpirit of party; and that, in fine, when we are to praiſe his genius, his underſtanding, his mind, and prove the ſuperior influence which his writings have had upon our Revolution, and the acknowledgment we therefore owe him, I have nothing to do, but to give myſelf up to my feelings and internal convictions.

Rouſſeau ſubſcribed for a ſtatue of Voltaire —he wept for joy when informed of his triumph at the French theatre. At this day, when the nation decrees a ſtatue to him, which he has ſo juſtly merited, his voice re-unites itſelf, from the manſions of peace and happineſs, with the voice of the admirers of Voltaire, who ſolicit the nation for a ſtatue to his memory.—France, however, ought not to acquit herſelf partially of her obligations—the very ſame chizzel ſhould immortalize

immortalize itſelf by the image of theſe two great men. A very ſimple inſcription would prove their claims to be equal. At the foot of the ſtatue of Jean Jacques we might inſcribe—*To the founder of liberty.* At that of Voltaire—*To the deſtroyer of ſuperſtition.*

(E. See page 85.)

I have ſaid in my firſt letter that this calumny had been ſeaſoned with a perfidious kindneſs;—attend to the confirmation of this aſſertion: "Truth obliges me to declare, (though "not without the ſincereſt regret) that the "benefactor had afterwards much reaſon to "complain of him whom he had ſo nobly and "ſo readily obliged. But the death of the "aggreſſor, the ſtrong reaſons we have had to "complain of it ourſelves, obliges us *to draw "the curtain over this affecting detail,* the proofs "of which are unfortunately depoſited in "authentic letters."———*Eulogium of Lord Marechal.*

What other name can be given to all this hypocriſy, when, not only there are no proofs, nor authentic letters, but when it is authentically proved, that to the end of his life Rouſſeau uniformly preſerved and profeſſed the ſame veneration—the ſame affection for Lord Marechal? We find a thouſand proofs of this in his letters and poſthumous works.—To this we may add the following extract of a letter

from M. du Peyrou:—" No, Madam, Jean " Jacques could not have given any other cauſe " of offence to Lord Marechal, than by his " miſunderſtanding with Mr. Hume; and if " from this period that nobleman's correſpon- " dence has been leſs frequent, it has never " totally ceaſed. I learn from J. Jacques " himſelf, that he ſometimes heard from this " reſpectable friend. I know from Lord " Marechal, that in diſcountenancing this cor- " reſpondence, through very prudent reaſons, " occaſioned by his age, he deſired and re- " queſted to hear from *his J. Jacques.* I have " ſeen him on my journey to Paris, in 1775, " expreſs to me in the fulneſs of his heart, " *ſentiments of tenderneſs and veneration for the* " *man whom he loved and reſpected beyond every* " *other.* I have ſeen him affected at the recital " I made him, of the numerous teſtimonies " which I had at Valentia in Spain, of that " affectionate and reſpectful remembrance " which they cheriſhed for the perſon and " virtues of a man truly formed to inſpire " ſuch ſentiments." (See the 6th vol. of the Supplement to Rouſſeau's Works.)

" O my good Lord! *O my worthy father,*" ſays this *ungrateful* Jean Jacques, in the laſt Book of his Confeſſions, " how is my heart " yet moved when I think of you! ah! bar- " barians! How ſevere a blow have they ſtruck " in detaching you from me! But no—no, il- " luſtrious man!—you are—and you always " will be the ſame to me, who am unchange- " able.

" able. They have, indeed, deceived you, " but they have not made you alter your opi- " nions."

It is worth while to obſerve the identity of the terms in the *Sentiments of the Citizens*, and in the paſſage of Lord Marechal's eulogium, quoted at the beginning of this Note. *We confeſs with grief and ſhame*, ſays Voltaire; and, *it is not without the ſincereſt regret*, ſays D'Alembert. Bertrand and Raton ſpoke often the ſame language *.

(F, ſee p. 85)

Note in the Eſſay on the Life of Seneca: " If, by a ſingularity which is not abſolutely " without example, a work ſhould appear in " which honeſt men are mercileſsly aſſaſſi- " nated by an hypocritical villain, aſk your- " ſelves, if a ſhameleſs wretch, who ſhould " confeſs himſelf guilty of a thouſand " infamies, is deſerving of credit. What " more could calumny inflict upon him, " and *what could a crime, more or leſs*, in-

* This alluſion to the correſpondence of Voltaire and d'Alembert, will remind us, perhaps, that in that correſpondence, d'Alembert is far from inſpiring Voltaire with reſentment againſt Rouſſeau, as many people accuſe him; he even goes ſo far as to ſpeak in his favour; and, notwithſtanding what I have ſaid, many perſons will draw inferences that he thought favouraby of Rouſſeau. But ſuppoſe d'Alembert was, himſelf, one of the editors of Voltaire's works? but, more particularly, of his own Letters, addreſſed to the Philoſopher of Ferney, in which he abſolutely makes what alterations, additions, and retrenchments he thought proper? But theſe are *ſuppoſitions*.—No; they are facts.

" creaſe

" creaſe the ſecret turpitude of a life con-
" cealed, during more than fifty years,
" under the moſt impenetrable *maſk of hypo-*
" *creſy*.—Reject with indignation his infamous
" book——Deteſt the ungrateful being who
" ſpeaks ill of his benefactors—deteſt the at-
" trocious man who does not ſcruple to in-
" jure his former friends--deteſt the indolent,"
&c. Compare this virulent—this tedious threadbare rant, with the paſſage of the Confeſſions quoted in my firſt Letter; compare it with ſome letters from Jean Jacques to Diderot; with that, for example, which concludes thus: " All your eagerneſs—all
" your zeal to procure what I have no oc-
" caſion for, touches me but little.—I only
" wiſh for friendſhip, and that is the only
" thing I am refuſed. Ungrateful! I have
" not rendered thee ſervices, but I have loved
" thee, and thou couldſt not repay with thy
" life what I have felt for thee during three
" months. Show this article to thy wife,
" more equitable than thou art, and aſk of
" her, when my preſence was agreeable to thy
" afflicted heart,—how I regulated my con-
" duct, and looked forward to the moment
" when I was to go to Vincennes, to conſole
" my friend;" alluding to the refuſal which Diderot made, ſome time ſince, to viſit him at the Hermitage. " Cruel unfeeling man! two
" tears ſhed in my boſom, would have pre-
" vailed more with me than the empire of the
" world—but thou refuſeſt me, and delight

" in raviſhing from me this comfort. Very " well, keep all the reſt, I will have nothing " more to do with thee."

Laſtly, compare this with that other letter which commences with theſe words: " I muſt, " my dear Diderot, write to thee once more." (You will there ſee a prophecy, which this very Note, in the Eſſay on the Life of Seneca, ſeems to verify.) " You may have been miſ- " led, or miſtaken. Your friend, notwith- " ſtanding, groans in ſolitude, forgot by all he " formerly held dear. He may there fall into " deſpair, or die curſing the ungrateful man " who has cauſed him to ſhed ſo many tears. " Poſſibly, the proofs of his innocence may, at " length, reach you, that you may be compelled " to honour his memory, and that the image of " your dying friend *will not leave your nights* " *tranquil.* Diderot, reflect on this, I ſhall " mention it no more." Does it not appear, that this violent note to Diderot, dictated in the fury of delirium, was the conſequence of one of thoſe nights which Rouſſeau had predicted.

(G. ſee p. 86.)

It is not a little remarkable, that a man of no ſmall ſhare of underſtanding ſhould prove directly what he wiſhes to refute, and that his arguments ſhould bear with them their own refutation. Obſerve the explanation relative to Rouſſeau, which M. Cerutta puts in the mouth of M. Holbach himſelf, in relating, as he

he assures us, his own words: "Nothing was "more common than the general conversa- "tion of Jean Jacques; but it became really "sublime, or ridiculous, the moment he was "contradicted. *I have to reproach myself for* "*having multiplied these contradictions, to* "*multiply those moments of eclat and enthu-* "*siasm.*—I was passionately fond of Italian "music; he was the same. His Village For- "tune-teller was neither more approved nor "more highly applauded than by me; but the "musical genius of the author was subject to "the same disparity as his other talents. He "was accused as a plagiary. I did not lay "snares, but *I hazarded tests*, and from this "moment I lost his friendship. Having lost "my first wife, I received from him so condol- "ing a letter, that I thought his friendship "reanimated by my sorrow. I entertained— "I sought him—I humoured him with fresh "zeal, and, as I may say, almost paternal af- "fection. At this very moment, he had "miserably engaged in a very vulgar con- "nection."

A more afflicting contrast can scarce be conceived, than he presented with his Theresa and his genius. Diderot, Grimm, and I, *made a friendly association* against this odd and ridiculous assemblage. *He was hurt at our zeal—indignant at our disapprobation;* and from this moment, he turned with real furor against *our anti-Theresian philosophy.* The more we sought to lead him back towards his ancient principles,

ciples, and his former friends, the more he ſtarted aſide from both. And who would not have done the ſame? Can that be called friendſhip and zeal? Is it not rather a perſecution and an abſolute tyranny? And do we not here find the key of all the malicious machinations which Rouſſeau attributes to that ſociety.

The letter concludes with a curious anecdote, which I regret not having ſeen in his Confeſſions; Rouſſeau could not have wrote it better, and if he has not availed himſelf of it, it was only through failure of memory. It would have afforded him an excellent ſcene, and would not have been one of thoſe diſcoveries which he laments as being ſo painful. "One would not imagine the ſcene which "cauſed our rupture," continues M. d'Holbach. "He dined one day at my houſe, in "company with many men of letters, Diderot, St. Lambert, Marmontel, the Abbé "Raynal, and a Rector, who, after dinner, "read us a tragedy of his own compoſing. It "was preceded by a diſcourſe on theatrical "compoſitions, the ſubſtance of which was as "follows. He diſtinguiſhed Comedy and "Tragedy in this manner. "In Comedy," he "ſaid, "the buſineſs is marriage, and in Tra-"gedy, murder. All the plot, in both, turns "upon this peripateia—ſhall they marry or "not?—ſhall they kill, or ſhall they not?—"they ſhall marry—they ſhall kill. This is the "firſt Act——They ſhall not marry—they "ſhall not kill. This is the ſecond Act.—— "A new mode of marrying and killing preſents "itſelf,

" itſelf. This is the third Act.—A new dif-
" ficulty riſes, reſpecting the perſon they
" would marry or kill—which conſtitutes the
" fourth Act.—At length, weary with oppoſi-
" tion, marriage or death terminates the
" piece." We found this reverie ſo ſingular,
" that it was impoſſible for us ſeriouſly to reply
" to the queſtions of the author. I will even con-
" feſs, that, half laughing, I bantered the poor
" Rector. All this time, Jean Jacques had not
" uttered a ſyllable—had not once ſmiled, nor
" moved from his arm-chair; at length, he ſud-
" denly ſtarted up like a mad man, and darting
" at the Rector, ſnatched his manuſcript, and
" ſaid to the terrified author, " Your piece is
" good for nothing—your diſcourſe ridicu-
" lous; all theſe Gentlemen are laughing at
" you.—Get out, and go do your duty in your
" village." The Rector then roſe with equal
" rapidity, and poured out every poſſible invec-
" tive againſt this too ſincere Critic, and from
" abuſe he would have proceeded to blows;
" and, poſſibly, a tragic murder might have
" enſued, if we had not parted them. Rouſſeau
" went out in a rage, which I believed momen-
" tary, but which, ſo far from ſubſiding, has ever
" ſince increaſed. In vain did Diderot, Grimm,
" and I, aſſay to bring him back--he eſcaped our
" purſuit. Afterwards happened all thoſe miſ-
" fortunes in which we had no other ſhare than
" that of our afflictions—but he conſidered all
" as fictitious, and his misfortunes occaſioned
" by us."

I believe

I believe this affliction ſincere on the part of M. de Holbach, and am far from thinking that he was either actively, or perſonally, concerned in Rouſſeau's misfortunes; but to form a juſt judgment of this ſcene, we ſhould continually keep before our eyes, not only Jean Jacques's eccentric, but his frank and open character, averſe to all diſſimulation, and conſequently to every ſpecies of banter, and that impoſſibility of diſſembling a momentary impulſe which attended him all his life.—How then did he conſider this Rector? As a miniſter of religion, whom we ought to reſpect, and who ought to do nothing derogatory from that reſpect. In what light did he conſider theſe philoſophers?—As perſons equally ſerious in their deportment, as in their writings and diſcourſe, whoſe very jeſts and pleaſantries ought always to preſerve an air of wiſdom and decorum.—A Rector who does and ſays extravagant things—Philoſophers who encourage him, and by ſigns, intelligible among themſelves, but unintelligible to him, laugh and divert themſelves at his folly. Nothing of all this could be agreeable to him. His childiſh paſſion is not indeed a trait of politeneſs, nor what is called knowledge of the world, but what is there in it ſo very culpable? How true —how juſt are the ideas it diſplays. What ſecurity could he himſelf expect hereafter, from a ſociety where, at every ſtep, he might fall into ſimilar ſnares. In ſhort, if this tragi-comic Rector could ſuddenly have received the gift

gift of reading hearts, upon whom would he have vented his rage, and committed this *tragic murder?* Upon his too ſincere informer, or, his ironical admirers?

(H. ſee p. 97.)

M. de Peyrou appears to have fulfilled, with moſt fortitude and publicity, this honourable taſk, notwithſtanding ſome miſunderſtandings which were latterly between him and Rouſſeau, as he gives us to underſtand from an advertiſement prefixed to the ſecond part of the Confeſſions, and laſt Collection of Letters.—In only one inſtance do I conſider him to be reprehenſible, and that is, for having unneceſſarily printed in this Collection a note of Rouſſeau's, relative to M. de Vernes, and remarks of M. de Vernes upon this Note, which we are not a little ſurpriſed to find, in a book coming from a perſon who profeſſes himſelf to be their common friend; eſpecially as this Note and theſe remarks are ſo injurious to the reputation of both parties. Rouſſeau was cenſurable in having ſuſpected M. de Vernes, to be the author of a libel compoſed by Voltaire. M. de Vernes is reprehenſible for not having anſwered clearly and ingenuouſly this charge during Rouſſeau's life, and particularly, for having given colour to this ſuſpicion, by publiſhing ſome time before, in a Chriſtian and intolerant country, a work where he intended to prove, that his friend Rouſſeau

Rouſſeau was not a Chriſtian. As to his Notes upon this paſſage, they would be perhaps excuſable, notwithſtanding their ſeverity, if this occurrence had been previouſly publiſhed; but M. du Peyrou was the only perſon who knew any thing about it, and therefore ſhould have deſtroyed it after Rouſſeau's death. M. de Vernes was ſufficiently cleared of this imputation, ſince Voltaire was univerſally known to have been the author of that libel.

(I. See p. 99.)

Theſe are the verſes which I have copied from this place in 1785. They merit being known, or rather perhaps being reprobated.

O thou whoſe glowing works
Were created in this humble Hermitage!
Rouſſeau!—more eloquent than wiſe,
Why doſt thou quit my country.
Thou haſt choſen this calm retreat;
I offer thee happineſs, and thou ſpurneſt it.
Ungrateful thou flieſt, and my heart bleeds at it.
But why recall the afflicting remembrance?
I ſee—I read—and all is forgiven.

I mean neither to ſpeak of created writings, nor of a little country houſe, called Mon Pays; nor other baldneſſes of ſtyle. But be it as it may, could ſhe — could Madame de Epinay aſk why Rouſſeau quitted the Hermitage? Had ſhe the right to call him ungrateful?—Read and judge!

" I wiſhed

"I wiſhed to quit the Hermitage, and I "ought to do ſo; but it is ſuggeſted, that I "ſhould remain there till the ſpring; ſince "my friends wiſh it, I will remain there till "then, provided you give your conſent."

Anſwer.——"Since you determine to leave "the Hermitage, and you ought to do ſo, I "am ſurprized that your friends have prevent-"ed you. For my part, I never conſult my "friends upon my duty, and I have no longer "any thing to ſay upon your's."

In fine—It cannot well be ſuppoſed that ſtrangers, who came to viſit this place, rendered ſacred by Rouſſeau's reſidence, will ſuppreſs totally thoſe indignant ſenſations which they muſt neceſſarily feel at ſeeing there reproaches engraved in gold letters upon the object of their admiration. The proprietors would do well to avail themſelves of theſe hints, and either remove the marble altogether, or eraſe its reproachful inſcriptions. This is, doubtleſs, what they have not done—for now no ſtranger is permitted to enter the Hermitage.—Thoſe who now inhabit this houſe are become its gaolers, and I can bear them witneſs, that they acquit themſelves well of this employment; for laſt year I found them deaf to the moſt humble entreaties, and all the addreſſes of politeneſs.

(K. See p. 104.)

People have had the audacity to accuſe her publicly of having been foremoſt to perſuade Rouſſeau to put their children to the Foundling; although he declares, in his Confeſſions, that Thereſa was extremely averſe to this meaſure, and that he had the greateſt difficulty to conquer her repugnance—Reſpecting the three others, he neither ſpeaks of her oppoſition nor conſent. How then, without any proofs, can people fabricate ſo ſerious an accuſation? I think it unneceſſary to enumerate other charges, without doubt, equally futile and aſperſive—as ſince Rouſſeau's death the remainder of his enemies have inceſſantly accumulated againſt his widow. Any direct teſtimony—any publication to prove this, does not force my belief, as I am ſo fortunate as never to be credulous of ſcandal.

P. S. I leave the Text and the Notes as they were ſix months ago, and I have no reaſon to repent my incredulity. Rouſſeau's widow has been ſolemnly juſtified, and vindicated from all theſe aſperſions by the repreſentatives of a great people, whom her huſband inſtructed in morals and in liberty. The National Aſſembly has dignified itſelf in honouring the man whom it might, at once,

term

term the firſt and moſt eloquent of its inſtitutors, by decreeing a ſtatue to his memory, and by charging the ſtate with the maintenance of his conſort, whom, after ſo many toils and misfortunes, he left poor indeed, as himſelf, but enriched by the public monuments of his glory, and the remembrance of his virtue.

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